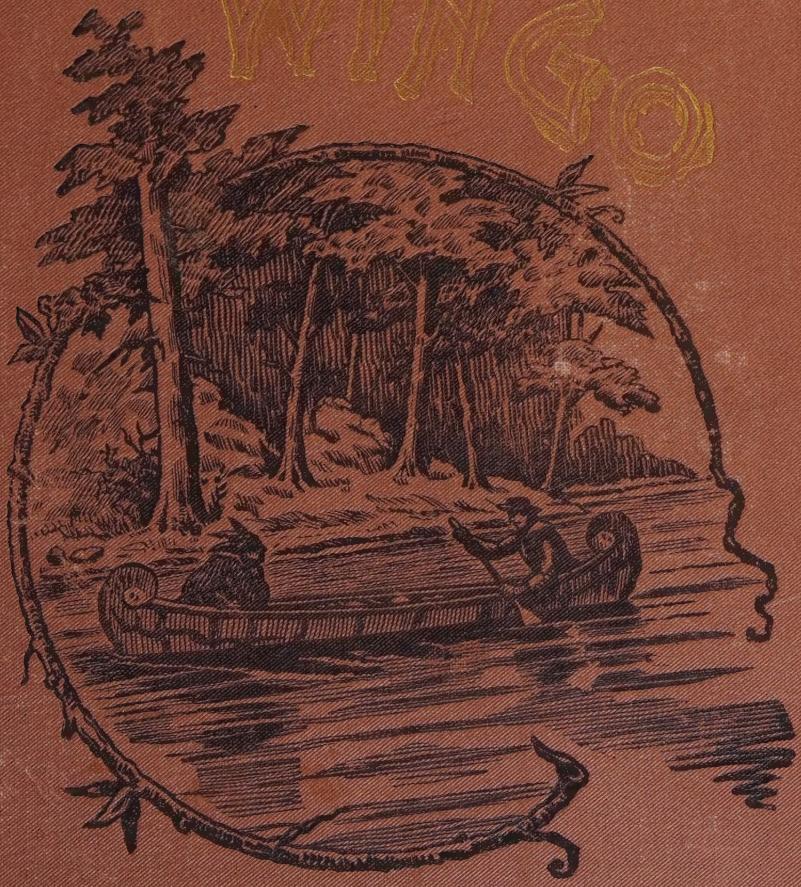
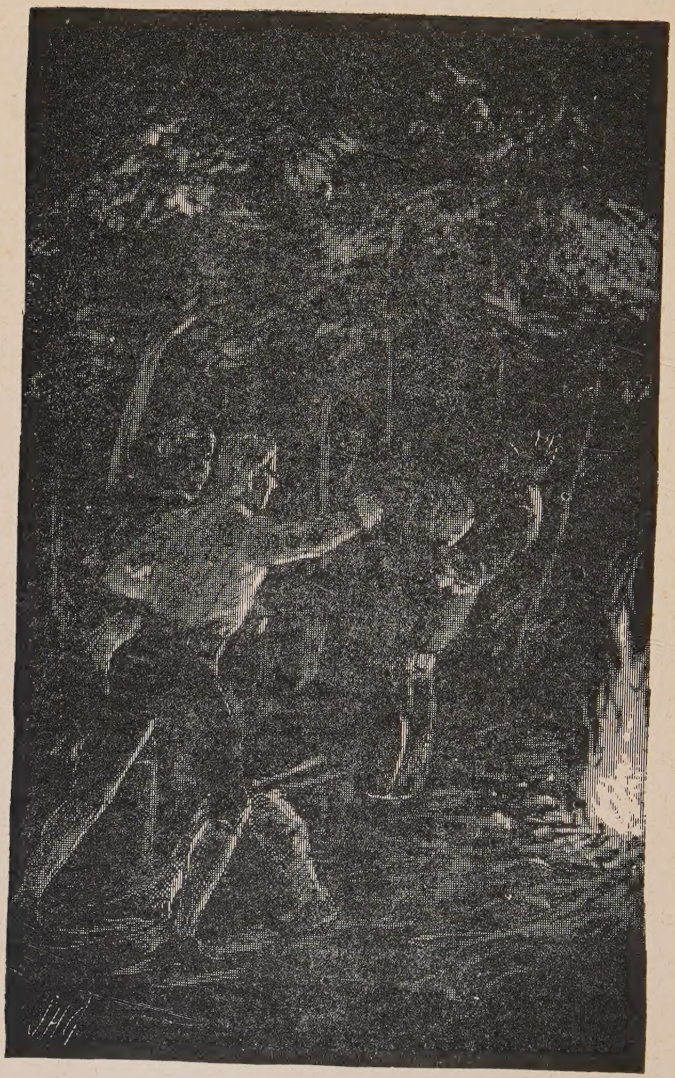
LENA RINGO



EDWARD S. ELLIS.



NED CLINTON STRUCK HIM A BLOW WHICH FELLED HIM TO THE GROUND.—Page 44.

RIVER AND WILDERNESS SERIES, NO. III.

Lena-Wingo, the Mohawk,

A Sequel to The Wilderness Fugitives

BY

EDWARD S. ELLIS

AUTHOR OF

"YOUNG PIONEER" SERIES, "LOG CABIN" SERIES, "DEERFOOT" SERIES, ETC.

ILLUSTRATED

ST. PAUL
THE PRICE-McGILL COMPANY
455–473 CEDAR STREET

COPYRIGHTED 1893
BY
THE PRICE-McGILL CO.

PRINTED AND PLATED BY
THE PRICE-McGILL COMPANY
ST. PAUL, MINN.

CONTENTS.

CHAP.		PAGE.
I	The Tory Camp,	7
II	Captivity,	15
III	A Ray of Hope,	21
IV	On the Threshold,	27
V	Despair,	34
VI	Another Signal,	40
VII	The Flight,	47
VIII	Hunting for Friends,	55
IX	Finding a Friend,	63
X	An Empty Cavern,	71
XI	A Stealthy Foe,	78
XII	A Curious Combat,	85
XIII	The Young Scouts,	92
XIV	A Strange Discovery,	102
XV	A Disturbance in Sleep	109
XVI	An Unwelcome Visitor,	114
XVII	All Adrift,	120
XVIII	All Alone,	125
XIX	The Pursuers	132
XX	The Iroquois and Their Captive,	139
XXI	Going Toward Camp,	146
XXII	Savages,	152
XXIII	Is He a Friend,	159
XXIV	More an Enemy than a Friend,	168
XXV	The Hostile Camp,	175
XXVI	Feminine Diplomacy,	182
XXVII	Diamond Cut Diamond,	189
XXVIII	Vain Scheming,	197
XXIX	At the Shore,	205
XXX	The Pursuers	212
XXXI	Following the Trail,	219
XXXII	A Strange Interview,	226
XXXIII	Through by Daylight,	235
XXXIV	Conclusion,	242

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/lenawingomohawk0000edwa

LENA-WINGO, THE MOHAWK.

CHAPTER I.

THE TORY CAMP.

As the reader of The Wilderness Fugitives will recall, Ned Clinton, wandering a short distance from the cavern in which Jo Minturn and his sister Rosa were resting, was unexpectedly captured by a band of Iroquois Indians, against whom the fugitives had been maneuvering for several days. Lena-Wingo, the matchless Mohawk, who had proven the most valuable of friends and guides, was temporarily absent on a scout to learn whether the way was open to conduct his friends into Wilkesbarre, their destination. Thus it was that, after so many thrilling experiences and narrow escapes, the youth was overtaken by the saddest of misfortunes, when on the threshold of safety itself.

The captors conducted him to the camp of the Tory, Colonel Butler, he who was the author of the Wyoming massacre. It was not his regular camp or headquarters, as that was on the other side of the Susquehanna, but the post which he had established for convenience while prosecuting the search for Rosa Minturn. In this search the colonel did not engage personally, as all whom he brought with him were able to do that kind of work much better than he; but his interests were so concerned and woven into the results of this expedition that he could not wait upon the other side of the river until the news of success or failure should be brought to him. He had therefore crossed with his squad, his force in the vicinity of Wilkesbarre consisting of about twenty men, nearly all of whom were of the Iroquois people, including the best warriors and trailers of the tribe.

The camp being temporary in its nature, was of the simplest character. The weather was so warm that a fire was anything but a luxury, and that which had served to prepare the mid-day meal was nothing but a mass of smouldering embers, around which were grouped something like a half score of Indians, including those

who had just come in, the others being off in the forest following up the search of the fugitives, or watching their movements, so that in case they attempted to make a sudden rush into Wilkesbarre, the force could be concentrated in time to shut them off. This group of Indians was within gunshot of the fortifications of the town. Some of the others were scattered here and there on the other side, on the watch for the first movement of the whites and their Mohawk guide, intelligence of which was certain to be reported on the instant by signal. As Lena-Wingo was aware of all these precautions, and was maneuvering at the same moment on the opposite side from the camp, it will be seen that the situation was becoming critical.

Ned Clinton noticed the Indians lolling about the dead camp fire on this sultry afternoon, but he fixed his eyes on Colonel Butler himself. The last named person was sitting on a fallen tree smoking a pipe, with his eyes upon the ground, as if in deep thought, so that he failed to notice the party when it arrived. The warriors were coming and going so continually that there was nothing in the arrival of the party to lead him to suspect anything unusual. Captain Bagley

was standing a dozen feet off, also smoking a pipe, and talking with an Indian when he noticed the prisoner. Walking over to where the colonel was sitting he whispered something in his ear. The Tory raised his head and looked at the prisoner, who stood with folded arms in front of him.

"Hello!" he exclaimed. "Where did you come from?"

"From the other side of the river," answered Ned, who meant to be neither cringing nor defiant.

"What business have you on this side of the Susquehanna?"

"I came over with a couple of friends to help escort Miss Rosa Minturn to Wilkesbarre."

"You did, eh? And what did you want to do that for? Wasn't she safe in her own home near Forty Fort?"

"Her parents preferred that she should stay in Wilkesbarre, until the Tories and Indians withdrew from the valley."

"I don't see why they should do that when I told them that I would take her under my care and give her every attention."

Ned Clinton was tempted to say that the Tory had given the very reason for the flight, but he did not think it wise to provoke him, as it was plain he was in no amiable mood. Ned made no answer to the remark, but quietly waited until he should choose to address his words directly to him.

"Are you her brother?" asked Butler, looking him in the face, as if he expected to hear a falsehood in reply.

"No, I am only a friend of her brother. We were in the army together, and I accompanied him on this expedition."

"What is your name?"

"Edward Clinton."

"Ah! I have heard of you before. I think you hold a very tender feeling toward this lady."

This was uttered with such a tinge of scorn that it stirred the anger of the youth to hear his affection for Rosa spoken of in such a slighting manner. He managed to control the indignant reply that rose to his lips, however, and contented himself with declaring that which otherwise he would have held modestly back.

"Yes, I hold her in the highest regard; indeed,

there is no one in the world whom I love as I do her."

Butler seemed astonished at the boldness of this declaration. He sat for a minute or two, puffing his pipe harder than usual, while he looked in the face of the youth, with an expression made more repulsive by the stem of the pipe between the lips.

"And so you started to Wilkesbarre with her! When do you expect to get her there?"

"Well, the task of doing that rests mainly with Lena-Wingo, the Mohawk, and he told me a short time ago that he had no doubt he would place her safely within the town before to-morrow morning."

This sounded like an impolitic revelation of the scheme of the Iroquois, but Ned knew that it was precisely what the scout would desire him to say under the circumstances.

"Do you think he will be able to do it, when I have brought over twenty warriors of the Iroquois to capture them?"

"The Mohawk is aware of that, and does not seem to think it will be sufficient to prevent him from doing as he wishes. They tried to keep him from crossing the river, but they couldn't,

and he came over right in their faces, bringing the lady, her brother and myself with him."

"That's a different thing from entering Wilkesbarre, as he will soon find out."

"He has already been in there to-day, and he believes he can go again, and as often as he may wish."

"We don't care how often he goes alone, but let him try it with the lady, and see where he will fetch up."

This was said in a boasting manner that did not deceive Ned, who saw that the Tory had strong fears that the attempt of the Mohawk, if made, might succeed.

"Perhaps he will fail," said the youth, in the same quiet voice he had used from the first. "But he is so sanguine that we have strong faith in his success. To-day, as I have said, he entered the town and came out again."

"And was discovered by a party of our warriors."

"And killed two of them," promptly responded the captive, unaware how much he was stirring the anger of the Tory.

"We can very well afford to spare a couple of our Indians when we have so many."

"But you can't spare Dick Evans so well, for, if the Mohawk had not shot him at the very time he did, he would have led the captain and his party right to the cavern where we had taken refuge."

Colonel Butler was angrier than ever, but succeeded in keeping his passion in hand.

"There has been a feud for a long time between them, and one was bound to fall by the hand of the other sooner or later. I don't know as it makes much difference if the time comes a little sooner than the victim expects."

The youth noticed the wrath in the face of the Tory, and he thought it best to seek to quiet it.

"It made no difference about the shooting of Evans at that time, for if he had been let alone and had led Captain Bagley and the Indians to the cavern where we had been left, he would have seen nothing of us. He was gone but a little while from the place when we awoke, and becoming satisfied that something was wrong, we stole out and took refuge elsewhere."

CHAPTER II.

CAPTIVITY.

THE information thus communicated by Ned Clinton was not only gratifying to Colonel Butler, but to Captain Bagley, who was standing near, listening to the conversation. When he heard this assurance, he ventured to strike in:

"That confirms what I told Evans all along; I said that he had waited too long, and that it was useless to expect we should find the party as they had been left in the cavern, but he was so anxious to press ahead and win the reward which the colonel had offered that there was no persuading him, and I was forced into the thing against my better judgment."

"Still the loss of Dick is a severe one to our cause," said the Tory leader, taking the opposite tack, now that the others seemed to drift away from their starting point. "We could have spared a dozen other men better; he has been of great help to us ever since we started for the valley. He knew the country so well

that he made the best of guides. That Mohawk who shot him will have to pay for it."

"Lena-Wingo knows the penalty he has incurred," said Ned, "but he knows, too, that he is in no greater danger now than yesterday. Before the Iroquois can inflict the penalty on him they must get a chance."

"Come!" exclaimed the colonel, "I have heard all of your impudence that I mean to listen to."

"I meant no insolence," said Ned, apologetically, "and beg pardon if I have offended."

"What do you mean, then, by boasting in that style to my face?"

"I was not boasting. You asked me for information and I tried to give it. If there was any boasting it must have been when I spoke for the Mohawk, for there isn't anything in my history that I can boast about."

"I should say not! You're a pretty young man to play the lover to a lady. You can't go out to take a walk without being picked up by a party of Indians."

"That was an unfortunate slip on my part," assented Ned; "but we are all liable to fall into mistakes at some time or other of our lives."

'When a youth like you goes out to play the cavalier for a lady, he ought to have pluck enough to fight for her."

This imputation upon his courage was more than Ned could bear.

"Give me a chance and you will see whether I will fight! The first thing the Indians did was to steal my gun so as to deprive me of a chance to help myself. That is the reason why I came in so quietly. A man is a fool to make a fight when he has no chance."

"Brave men don't stop to weigh the chances."

"Suppose, then, that when the Mohawk stole toward you the other night, as you were going toward him with your sword, you had stood your ground. Why, Colonel Butler would never have been spared to tell of his exploits in the Wyoming valley."

These were daring words for a prisoner to utter in the presence of his captor, and Ned Clinton ran more risk than he supposed. The furious Tory sprang from his seat on the log, and advanced upon the youth to punish him for the words he had dared to fling in his face. There seemed to be no escape from an indignity

at the hands of Butler, who drew his sword as if he meant to use it.

"I am unarmed," said Ned, recoiling a pace or two," and if you consider it a brave thing to strike me when I have no power to strike back, I submit."

"Strike you? Of course I shall, for these Indians have had too much trouble to get you to allow you to go unpunished. I shall turn you over to them, and when they get through there won't be much left of Rosa Minturn's cowardly lover."

At this juncture, one of the Iroquois, thinking that the colonel meant to kill the young man, stepped forward and protested, reminding him that his people had been promised the disposal of all prisoners they might capture. The Indian was some sort of a chief, whose influence was considered of value by the Tory colonel, for the latter lowered his sword and returned to his seat on the fallen tree, saying as he did so:

"I can afford to leave them to take care of you, but I warn you, young man, that I will bear no more of your insolence. You are a prisoner, and should have nothing to say. You might be better employed in making peace with

your Maker, for the time you have to do it in is not very long."

"I try to live so that when the summons comes I shall be ready," was the dignified answer of the youth, who thus heard for the first time the intimation that he was condemned to death.

The brutal words of the Tory could not but produce a shock on one of his young and ardent temperament, but he was too high spirited to allow his captor to see anything like blanching. He was still standing with folded arms, calm and prepared for whatever might come. But one so young and daring was not prepared to give up all hope at the announcement that it was intended to put him to death, for he had an abiding faith in an overruling Providence, and he recalled the numerous dangers through which his omnipotent Friend had brought him. There remained, too, an unfaltering confidence in Lena-Wingo, who had so often appeared at the critical moment, and extricated him and his companions from peril.

The warm sultry afternoon was well advanced, and Ned began to speculate with all the powers of a naturally active mind as to what his cap-

tors were likely to do with him. His chief curiosity was not whether they intended his death, for he had received assurance on that point, but rather as to the precise time, if there were any determined upon, when he was to undergo the great penalty. If they meant to do it within the next hour or so he was beyond human help; but if the purpose was to wait till night, he felt justified in hoping for aid from his Mohawk friend, who would be sure to find out his dilemma by that time.

After returning to his seat upon the fallen tree, Colonel Butler showed less disposition to talk than before. He was a man subject to moods—sometimes lively and entertaining, and on other occasions morose and sullen. Captain Bagley, who had become engaged in a discussion with one of the Indians (the same who interfered between the colonel and his victim) now walked to where Butler was sitting, and continued the conversation with him. He broke through the reserve of the officer, probably because the subject was one in which he could not but feel the deepest interest—being the means by which the captive should be disposed of.

CHAPTER III.

A RAY OF HOPE.

BUTLER and Bagley talked in low tones, desirous that the prisoner should hear nothing; but the senses of the youthful scout were strained to a supernatural fineness, and when he saw by their glances that he was the subject of the interview, he listened intently.

"One of the Indians wants to torture him right away," said the captain.

"Well, what's to hinder?"

"In the first place, half the redskins are gone, and among them is one of their principal men, who will be angry if he is not in at the death."

"They will soon be here—probably by the time the preparations are made."

"Then again, it is known that the Mohawk is prowling around the neighborhood, and there is no telling how soon these warriors may be signaled to go out and help capture him. If

the call should come just as everything is under way, it would make a bad mess of it."

"That might happen any time, even if they wait till night, for I don't see much chance of their getting him."

"They are sure of it this time; that Mohawk ain't the only smart Indian in the world; we have some with us who are his equal, and there are two that have been out since morning, that are his superior."

"I suppose they are the two that were shot while trying to capture him," growled Colonel Butler.

"Not at all; the rest are confident that a good account will come from them."

"I am not, by any means."

"We can afford to trust them in a case like this. Then, if they catch Lena-Wingo, nothing can break up the sport when it opens; and besides that, if they get him, a child will be able to bring in the girl and the boy that is watching over her."

The argument of Captain Bagley seemed to impress the Tory leader, who was in an ugly mood.

"Well, let them have their own way; they did us such good service in the battle the other day, that we must concede all we can to them."

"Shall I tell them, then, that your wish is to postpone the entertainment until the rest come in and the Mohawk is captured."

"Did you say that the majority hold that view?"

"Nearly all do."

"Then tell them that such is my counsel," replied the wily leader, neglecting no occasion to conciliate his allies.

Captain Bagley walked to where quite a discussion was still going on, and communicated the words of the Tory leader. This was oil upon the troubled waters. Those who had been the loudest in demanding there should be no delay in the infliction of the torture upon the captive ceased their arguments, for when the majority were reinforced by the views of the white leader, they felt that the party opposed to them was too formidable to combat.

Most of the Indians had been grouped together, while discussing the question. They now separated, some sitting upon the ground, others wandering aimlessly off into the woods, to pass the

time before their comrades could come in with the great Mohawk scout as their captive. It may seem strange that so many of the Iroquois should remain idle, when there was such important duty on hand. But the company were following some well arranged plan, which rendered this necessary for the time.

Ned Clinton overheard all that passed between Butler and Bagley, and was greatly relieved by the conclusion reached.

"If they defer my death till they bring in the Mohawk," he thought, "I am safe. But I can't hope they mean to do that. They will let me live till the rest of the warriors show themselves, which may be before dark. At any rate I have gained a respite, and I thank Heaven for it."

The wisdom of the postponement was soon manifest. Within ten minutes several signals came from the direction of the woods, intended for the ears of the warriors. The latter were all attention, those who were on the ground springing to their feet and listening, while even Colonel Butler raised his head and looked inquiringly toward the point whence came the call, as if he, too, would learn what it meant.

In the course of a few minutes precisely the same signals were repeated, apparently at no great distance. This time one of the Indians answered, his calls being of the same character, though a nicely trained ear would have detected a slight difference. For awhile this species of telegraphy went on, the parties invisible to each other, and yet talking like operators at the opposite ends of the electric wire.

Ned Clinton was unable to do more than guess what it all meant. But a chill went over him at the thought that possibly these signs might have conveyed the awful news of the capture of the Mohawk scout, upon whom so much depended. The thing might be improbable, but it could not be called impossible. There was more than one Iroquois searching diligently for him in the forest, and the youth had heard from the lips of Captain Bagley that these warriors were among the best that could be found in the Six Nations.

Wonderful as was the skill and prowess of Lena-Wingo, there were others of his own race who could be trained to approach him in the attainments which made him famous. When half a dozen of those Indians were abroad,

determined to force the scout to the wall and secure his capture, it was idle to believe he was not in great danger. Suppose they should capture him? The thought caused Ned to shudder, for such an event, he was sure, would bring the ruin of all in its train as an inevitable necessity. The wish of the Iroquois was to hold their present prisoner until the Mohawk could be brought in, when they would make a general jollification over the death and torture of both.

This alternate signaling continued for several minutes when it ceased as suddenly as it began. Ned was hopeful it did not mean that the Mohawk had been captured, for it seemed that, if such was the fact, those who had secured him would not stop and signal but would come immediately forward with their prize. When the calling ended, about half of the party in camp moved off into the woods, all taking different directions. This gave the captive more hope.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE THRESHOLD.

No attempt was made to bind Ned, probably because there was no necessity for the precaution. The prisoner was disarmed, and so surrounded by the vigilant Iroquois that no extra care was required to make his captivity secure. Several times Ned asked himself whether a desperate attempt on his part could result in any benefit to him. He was fleet-footed, but the warriors were among the very best that had entered the Wyoming valley, and he could not hope to equal them in that respect. Besides, every one of them held a rifle, to say nothing of the smaller arms, so that if any sudden chance should tempt him to make a dash for freedom, they could not fail to bring him down.

After the youth had turned the matter over in his mind, he concluded that, in view of what he had heard of the decision of the redskins, it would be the worst thing in the world to make the effort to get away at present, for it must

result in his captors taking such precautions that all chance to repeat it would be beyond his power. He regarded every half hour of delay as so much in his favor. When the night should descend, there might be some reason to consider the dash which had been in his mind so often; for in the favoring darkness of the forest close at hand, it was not altogether a vain hope that he could gain a start and concealment that would serve him well, and he was confident that the scout would not leave him to perish at the hands of the Tories and redmen.

The danger, then, as it seemed to him, was that the return of the Indians might lead the savages to wreak their vengeance upon him who was at their disposal. Hitherto he had maintained the standing position, but this became so wearisome that he walked to the nearest tree and sat down, with his head leaning against the trunk. As he took the few steps, every eye, including those of Colonel Butler and Captain Bagley, were fixed upon him, showing he was guarded most effectually. Ned selected his place, so that he was as near as he could get to the center of the camp, hoping thereby to

prevent any suspicion that he meditated any attempt to escape, and to defer the binding of his limbs, which he held in dread.

No one made any objection to the movement, nor did the white men speak or pay further attention. Colonel Butler remained seated upon the fallen tree, moodily smoking his pipe and giving heed to no one, while Captain Bagley seemed to be interested in a conversation with the Indian who had interfered when Butler advanced to inflict the punishment upon the insolent prisoner. What the thoughts of the Tory commander were it would have been hard to guess, but it is certain they were not of a pleasant character.

It may have been that in his mind's eye he saw again the scenes of the preceding few days; for no one who participated in the Wyoming massacre could fail to hold it in vivid remembrance to his dying day. Those events were such as were not witnessed often, even when the bitterest war is raging. He had invaded the valley, bringing the Iroquois with him as his allies, and had he not been accompanied by them, the victory of his forces would have been a rout instead; but the redskins, flushed with triumph,

became the fiends which they are by nature, and committed deeds of horror that the pen is powerless to describe. Colonel Butler was well aware, too, that his own men had played a part as shameful as that of the red savages. The act of the Tory named Pencil, who shot his own brother, who had taken refuge on Monacacy Island, though the only recorded instance of such an unnatural crime at that time, showed the spirit which actuated those who turned against their own country and wrought all the ruin and devastation in their power.

It may have been, as we say, that the fearful panorama of the few days before swept across his vision again, as he sat on the fallen tree, smoking his pipe and saying not a word to any of those around him; for it is well known that the stain of that terrible day remained with Colonel Butler through his life. It was one which never could be wiped out, and prevented his obtaining honors from the sovereign of England, upon which he had set his heart, and for which he used every effort.

Now and then Ned Clinton ventured to steal a glance at the colonel, but he was cautious, fear-

ful that if the man happened to look up and detect it, he would be angered. The situation remained thus for all of two hours, during which time nothing was seen of the Indians who had gone into the forest in answer to the summons of those who were there when Ned arrived in camp. It would be difficult to picture the anxiety with which the youth watched the wearing away of the summer afternoon. How he longed for the leaden hours to hurry by, and bring the night, in which he had come to believe lay his only hope! How every falling leaf caused him to start, under the fear that it was the sound of the moccasins of the returning Iroquois.

Again and again he stole a glance at the sun, which seemed like that of the prophet, standing still in the heavens while the warfare raged below. He marked its downward progress by the limbs of the trees overhead. It crept along by the spaces between the branches as though its burning eye looked down in pity and was loth to leave him in his misery. But the longest day must have its end, and the heart of the youth gave a throb of expectancy when the orb finally sank so low in the sky that it was hidden from sight by the body of the forest.

An hour or more must still pass before the twilight could become perceptible, but by far the greater part of the afternoon was gone, and if the Indians should continue absent much longer, Ned was hopeful that something could be done for himself. But as the day advanced, there was the greater probability of the warriors coming in, in which event he felt that hope would be gone, for he looked upon the darkness as indispensable to the success of the scheme he had formed. It was beginning to grow dark in the woods, and still nothing was seen or heard of the absent redmen. The figure of Colonel Butler on the log, with his pipe long since gone out, was showing the effect of the gathering darkness. The painted features of the Iroquois themselves were not as clearly defined as a short time before. The sun had sunk to rest, and Ned felt that a short space more must decide his fate. Was there a possibility of escaping the savages in whose power he was now placed? Ah! how many times he had asked himself that question since coming into camp! How fervently he had prayed to Heaven to extend its helping hand in this hour when he was unable to do aught for himself!

Darker and darker grew the air about him, until he felt that the time was near when he must make the effort that would result in life and liberty, or death! He controlled his emotions as best he could, fearful that some of the suspicious Indians would read his thoughts from the agitation which he could not wholly conceal. Finally, when he believed the moment had come, his ear caught a soft sound, and looking around, he saw the warriors who had gone away hours before coming back to the camp as stealthily as they departed.

CHAPTER V.

DESPAIR.

When Ned saw the rest of the Iroquois returning to the camp fire, he leaned back and sighed like one who had bidden farewell to all hope. When the first shock was over, he looked up and observed that the party did not bring back Lena-Wingo, the Mohawk, with them, as Captain Bagley had promised Colonel Butler should be done.

"That is as I knew it would be," said the captive to himself. "There is no possibility of their securing him, and they have found it out. Now they will see that there is nothing to be gained by putting off my death, and I may as well prepare for it."

The warriors were so occupied in talking for some minutes after their arrival, that they seemed to have forgotten their prisoner, but, somehow or other, they kept in such positions that there was no chance for him to make a dash for life. The return of the Indians without

the Mohawk prisoner was a great disappointment to Colonel Butler, as well as to Captain Bagley and the rest. The conversation was spirited, and to an observer unable to understand the words uttered, it looked as if there were angry feelings and recriminations. Ned had not risen from his seat on the ground, but as the conversation continued and he recovered, in a manner, from his depression, he gazed upon the scene, and showed some interest in what was going on, though not a word was understood.

"I heard that there were all of twenty of the warriors," he said, "and there are only twelve here, so there must be a half dozen still left in the woods, keeping up the hunt for the Mohawk, and to prevent his guiding Rosa within the fortifications of Wilkesbarre. But it is too much to hope that they will spare me till they all come in, or until another attempt is made to take Lena-Wingo. Oh! that I had made a start a few minutes sooner!"

The warriors continued their excited talk awhile longer, gradually becoming so enraged that Ned began to look for scenes of violence. But it ceased as suddenly as it had begun, and

the disputants fell apart as if all interest had died out. Then Ned noticed that while this wordy war was under way three of the redmen took no part but were employed in preparing supper. The fire had been raked apart so as to expose the flaming coals, and slices of meat were stretched upon these, where they immediately curled, crisped, and smoked in a way that showed they were ready for the palate almost as soon as they touched the embers. Beside this, there was bread and cake in abundance, the redmen appearing to appreciate the attractions of these articles of diet. There could be no doubt, therefore, that they had raided upon the possessions of some of the settlers, first murdering the owners, if they had escaped the general massacre of the few days before.

Ned Clinton was in too despondent a mood to feel any desire for food, though the odor of the scorching meat was enough to awaken the appetite of a dyspeptic himself.

"It isn't likely they would give me a mouthful if I was starving, and it would be fortunate if I could starve, and escape the torture they mean I shall suffer."

Up to this time no one seemed to pay attention to the youth, who sat by himself as though there was no interest in common between him and his captors. But now Captain Bagley approached and motioned him to rise. Ned obeyed.

"I have news to tell you," said the Tory; "something which must be of great interest."

Ned bowed.

"You know Lena-Wingo, the Mohawk?"

"I do."

"Well, he was shot a little while ago."

"How far from here?"

"Near by; within a hundred yards."

"How long since?"

"Within the last half hour."

"If it was that close, we ought to have heard the gun."

"Of course."

"Then how is it that we did not?"

Ned Clinton knew the Tory was lying, and was not ingenious enough to make his falsehood "hold water." Without wasting for the miscreant to recover his self-possession, Ned followed up his remark with a clincher.

"When you come to me with such a falsehood as that, Captain Bagley, you ought to make it bear inspection. There hasn't been a rifle fired anywhere near us within two hours past, so Lena-Wingo is as well and safe as he ever was, and it will be a long time before his scalp will dangle at the waist of any of the Iroquois. Have you any more news?"

Captain Bagley had no thought that his falsehood would be detected so quickly, that the prisoner would dare to speak to him in so insulting a manner. But Ned saw no hope for himself, and felt, therefore, no need of using restraint, even in a conversation of the kind. Captain Bagley was angry enough to strike the youth, though he had a better command of his temper than had Colonel Butler, under somewhat similar circumstances, during the afternoon. Instead, therefore, of showing any resentment, he answered:

"Yes, I have more news for you."

"Is it true or false?"

"You will soon find out for yourself."

"That will be the only way in which I shall be able to tell."

"Within half an hour you are to be burned to death at the stake."

"I am inclined to think you are speaking the truth now," replied the captive, without the slightest tremor in his voice. "For I don't see anything improbable in it."

"You can appreciate my kindness in coming to give you notice of what is coming, so that you may have time to repent of the day when you took up arms against King George."

This stirred angry feelings in the heart of Ned but he felt the occasion was too solemn for him to quarrel with the Tory, who was trying to rouse his passion. Were it otherwise, he would not have brooked the insult to his patriotism, but now he made no answer. If he had but half an hour in which to live, he ought to be able to call in his thoughts from the world and fix them upon that which was so near at hand.

"Leave me alone," he said to his persecutor; "I want the companionship of no one."

The brutal Tory refused this prayer, but remained tantalizing the poor captive, until, finding he could provoke no reply, he was forced to turn and leave him alone for the time being.

CHAPTER VI.

ANOTHER SIGNAL.

NED CLINTON found, after the departure of the Tory, that no one else was disposed to intrude on his privacy, although he was in the center of one of the noisiest groups of painted warriors that he had ever seen. Still, so impressed was he with the overpowering solemnity of the occasion, that he would have succeeded in shutting out all consciousness of their presence, but for the fact that once when he looked up, he caught sight of the preparations that they were making for his death. These were of so awful a character that it was impossible for him to fix his thoughts upon anything else.

Two Indians were gathering fuel from the wood, selecting the sticks with the greatest care, as if some unusual excellence was expected from each separate fagot which rendered this precaution necessary. As these were gathered, they were placed in a pile by the side of a tree about

a dozen feet away from where the youth was standing, the process being conducted with a care and deliberation that added impressiveness to an occasion which could not have well been more solemn. The other Indians were engaged in conversation which seemed to refer to the work of those warriors who were still absent. They were content to leave the preparations for the burning of the prisoner at the stake to those that had it in charge. They had seen and participated in too many similar scenes to allow themselves to show an undue interest in it.

Colonel Butler and Captain Bagley sat beside each other on the fallen tree, talking in low tones.

"I must die alone here," reflected the youth, with a sorrow which no pen can depict. "All that I could ask, now that I am doomed, is that I might kiss father and mother good-by, and take the hand of Rosa and look into her eyes once more, and telling how much I love her, give her, too, the farewell kiss—"

He stopped suddenly in the mournful strain that was finding expression, for at that instant there came a signal from the woods. Ned not only heard it, but it fell upon the ears of all the

Indians. There was a general starting up and listening. Even the two who were preparing the torture fire paused in their work as if they heard a call to battle from their chief.

The signal was a simple one, similar to that which had summoned the warriors to the forest during the afternoon. The attitude of all was that of attention and expectancy, as though the first sound was incomplete, and they were waiting for the complement in the form of an additional signal. The whistle, faint as it was, as it fell on the ear of Ned Clinton, sent a thrill of hope, like an electric shock, through his system. He saw in it, perhaps, a chance—though a desperate one—to attempt the scheme that was in his mind at the very moment the warriors came trooping back to camp and spoiled it all.

It may have been that the peculiar and supernaturally excited condition of the youth's nerves gave him an acuteness of perception which was denied the redmen about him at that moment. But as the faint call fell upon the ear of the youth, he was struck with the conviction that it came from a friend—even from Lena-Wingo, the Mohawk! If it were the Mohawk, he was

undoubtedly seeking to mislead the Iroquois into the belief that some of their own warriors were signaling them to enter the woods on urgent business. There was a prospect of his succeeding in this, provided he was not suspected, and not interfered with by those who were already in the forest.

After about the same interval that occurred in the former instance, there came a second signal, uttered with a quicker force, and intended to intimate there was urgency in the case. This accomplished its purpose. Fully two-thirds of the redmen caught up their rifles and vanished in the woods. This left the guard of the prisoner so weak that Colonel Butler suspected Ned might try to escape. Both he and Captain Bagley rose quickly from the log and walked over, so as to place themselves in front of the captive. Ned did not notice them until they paused within arm's length of him; and then, as he turned about, Colonel Butler said:

"All you've got to do is to wait."

"And you won't have much of that to do," added Captain Bagley, who, since the snubbing received from the prisoner, seemed to entertain a

more intense hatred, if possible, than the Tory leader himself.

At the moment the last words were spoken, Ned caught another signal—this time from almost the opposite quarter from whence came the other two. It was very low, and seemed to escape the notice of the two Tories, though it must have been heard by some of the Indians. When Ned caught it, he knew it came from the lips of Lena-Wingo, for he had heard the peculiar call before. It was intended to tell him that if he hoped to gain his life and freedom, now was the time!

A moment's delay would be fatal. Was he ready to make the attempt? He was, and the instant he was able to interpret the signal, that instant it was obeyed.

Colonel Butler stood a little nearer to him than the other Tory, and drawing back his fist, Ned Clinton struck him a blow on the side of the head, which felled him to the ground like a dead man. Captain Bagley showed more readiness than would have been expected. A suspicion of the truth seemed to flash upon him, and he uttered a shout, to bring the other Indians

to the help, as he bounded away in pursuit. He had taken but a few steps when he felt it was useless to try to overtake the fugitive, and raised his rifle for the purpose of wounding him. Before he could take aim, there was a flash from the darkness of the woods close at hand, and the Tory fell headlong to the earth, killed as suddenly and by the same hand that had checked the renegade, Dick Evans, earlier in the day!

Ned had no time to keep the run of events, crowding each other with lightning rapidity; all he had to do was to make the most of the opportunity thrown in his way. And he did all that was possible. As he sprang from the light thrown out by the camp fire into the darkness of the woods, he caught a shadowy glimpse of a tall form crouching on the ground, from which came the words, as he leaped by:

"Run fast, don't stop—run—run—make no noise—run—run!"

He recognized the voice of the Mohawk, but had no time to make reply, nor was he able to catch the last few words that escaped him, so that part of the friend's warning remained

unknown to the rushing fugitive. One of those warriors that had been indicated by Captain Bagley as the most skillful of all the Iroquois, and as the superior of Lena-Wingo himself was the first savage to respond to the call of the Tory, who had himself answered the summons which took him from off the earth.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FLIGHT.

A TALL and powerful Iroquois bounded directly toward the flying fugitive with such speed that he seemed likely to overtake him in a few of his extraordinary leaps. But before he could lay hands upon him, something flashed in the firelight; there was a sudden whiz in the air and the pursuer went down, his skull split in twain by the tomahawk that was sent like a thunderbolt from the hand of the ambushed Mohawk.

Before the other warriors could comprehend what had been done, the well-known yell of the red scout split the night air and then every Iroquois who heard it knew what had taken place. They had been decoyed into the woods by a false signal, so as to give the prisoner a chance to start for the shelter. It was a dreadful game the Mohawk had played upon them, and, comprehending it in all its details, they made a rush in the direction whence came the defiant shout, resolved to secure the terrible

scout, if the thing was possible. It was a part of Lena-Wingo's strategy to draw this general pursuit after himself, so as to give Ned Clinton the better chance to elude his enemies, who were dangerously near him. If the Iroquois or any one else could overtake him in a chase of this kind, he was willing to die at their hands to hide the disgrace of his failure.

Accordingly, the pursuers were no more than fairly in the woods, when the shout of the fugitive was heard again, so immediately in their front, that they pressed forward with all their energy instead of separating, as was their custom, under similar circumstances. Within the next few seconds the shout of the defiant Mohawk was heard again, seemingly closer than before. The hearts of the infuriated pursuers were stirred by the belief that they were about to secure the one who was more hated than all the enemies of their nation. Through the gloomy forest they plunged with a speed that threatened to dash out their brains against the trees and limbs in their path. But the defiant whoop of the Mohawk was heard no more. He had succeeded in drawing them off from the pur-

suit of the prisoner, and was now attending to his own safety.

This was a small matter to one of his skill and experience. He had only to make a turn in the line of his flight, and steal a short distance to one side of his path which his enemies were following and the thing was done!

Fortunately for Ned Clinton, he was quick enough to understand and avail himself of the tactics of the Mohawk. When he heard the well known whoop in one direction, he turned in another, and by that means he was free of all pursuers before he had reached a point two hundred yards from the camp. Once fairly within the shelter of the woods, with enough start to be free of immediate danger, it was a simple matter for him to keep clear of the warriors altogether. Still he was so fired with the wish to get as far from the camp as possible, that, after he had paused and assured himself there were none of them in his vicinity, he kept on running.

He was out of breath and nearly exhausted from the tremendous exertions he made at the commencement of his flight, and he kept up a

rapid walk, in lieu of the running he had been doing. And pressing forward in this way without any pause for further rest, his wind speedily came back, and he broke into a run again. This effort was of short duration, for he had gone only a brief distance when, to his surprise, he found himself on the border of the Susquehanna, and all progress in that direction was brought to an end.

"Well, here I am!" he exclaimed, as he came to a halt, and looking up to the sky, returned devout thanks to the One beyond those realms who had delivered him out of the very jaws of death, through the instrumentality of the matchless Mohawk scout. The fugitive youth stood for several minutes looking out upon the face of the calmly flowing river, as dimly shown by the faint light in the sky. There was something in the even flow of the noble stream which stirred a responsive chord in his heart, now that he had escaped the excitement which clung to him during the hours succeeding the decision of the Iroquois that he was to die the most frightful of deaths at the hands of these invaders of the Wyoming valley. There was a thrill of the heart, as he

recalled the scene of his rescue, and the desperate flight through the dark woods. But the reflection that all this was past, and that he stood on the shore of the Susquehanna, free once more, with the brilliant dream of his future gleaming as vividly as ever, brought a glow and sense of peace such as he had not known for a long time. Once again had Heaven interposed and delivered him, when it seemed there was no hope. And over and over again he sent up his thanks to God, who had kept him, as it were, in the hollow of His hand.

"Surely He will not desert us," he added, as he recalled the incidents of the last few days, "when He has done so much for us already. Rosa is safe in the cavern, waiting for us to come to her, and Jo is as free from danger as when he was at home, before the invasion of the valley. At most, he is only wondering at my absence, without suspecting the peril in which I have been placed, and the Mohawk—where is he?"

When he had recovered the full command of his thoughts, he began to consider the right course to take. Was it the wiser thing to make

his way back to the cavern, and there await the return of Lena-Wingo, or should he try to effect a junction with him in the forest? The former proceeding was the one to be followed, for, when the woods were so full of hostile Indians, searching for him and the Mohawk, the greatest risk was involved in an attempt of the kind mentioned.

"I can do nothing but go back to where Rosa is waiting for the coming of her friends," he concluded. "I have no weapon if I should happen to meet any of the Iroquois. It might be but a single one, and yet he would be able to do as he pleased with me."

No person could understand better than did he the dangers of falling into the power of the Indians and Tories, after what had just taken place. When he started on his return he was resolved that he would use every precaution, even if it should take him several hours to reach the shelter. But he hoped to rejoin his friends in less time than that. He had a tolerably clear idea of the ins and outs of the forest on this side of the river, for he had spent many a day in hunting in it before he was forced to

use it as a refuge from his enemies. Besides this, his arrival at the river was a help to enable him to keep the points of the compass in mind, and he set out, therefore, with great confidence of success. One of the first perils against which he sought to guard himself was that which seems always to threaten the wanderer in the woods—the tendency to follow a circular instead of a straight course.

"It would be a fine performance if I should drift back again to the camp from which I fled!"

Pausing long enough to make pretty clear in his mind the direction in which the encampment lay, he made a detour to the right, satisfied to go a long way off the course in order to escape the danger alluded to. Within the woods and among the dense undergrowth, where the gloom was almost impenetrable, he was not long in discovering that he had undertaken a task of no small difficulty. The fear that some of the savages might be lurking near at hand, listening for some movement on his part that would betray his whereabouts, caused him to exercise more caution than was really necessary. The

rustle of a leaf, or the flitting of a bird, disturbed by the slight wind which now and then stirred the tree-tops, was instantly attributed by the youth to the stealthy tread of the moccasin, and he paused until assured of his mistake.

CHAPTER VIII.

HUNTING FOR FRIENDS.

When Ned had wandered through the forest for a half hour or more, he began to have serious doubts as to whether he was following the right course. Not since leaving the shore of the Susquehanna had he been able to discover any landmarks to guide him, and no matter what pains he might take there was no escaping the danger which would have attended the movements of the most skillful hunter. For the dozenth time he came to a standstill, and tried to reason as to what he was doing, and as to the direction he ought to follow. On such occasions he could use no faculty except that of hearing, and that as yet was of no service whatever. The tomb itself could not have been more silent than was the wood, except when the gentle night wind rustled the branches overhead.

It was hard to comprehend that this valley had been the scene of terrible deeds within a few

days; that the warwhoops of the charging redskins, and the shout of the over-confident soldier, had been so closely followed by the wail of the dying victim, or the prayer of the poor fugitive pleading for mercy. And still harder was it to recall the experience of his own within the last few hours.

The scene by the camp fire; the insults from the Tories; the doom as it was told him; the signals from the darkness of the woods; the shot that stretched the Tory captain in death; the yells of the Iroquois when they detected the trick played them; the flash of the Mohawk's deadly tomahawk; his own dash for freedom; the run when he felt there was more than one vengeful Indian at his heels; the hurried warning of Lena-Wingo as the fugitive sped by him—all these seemed more like a vision of sleep than like sober reality, though he knew too well they were nothing else. But there was naught to be gained by staying where he was, and after a brief rest he started forward again.

"I think I must be in the neighborhood of the cavern," he concluded, picking his way with undiminished caution. "I have been traveling

over rising ground, such as there is between the river and the retreat, and I have gone far enough to reach the place. If I could run against some landmark that would give me a clue, it would be an easy matter—hello!"

Just then he caught the faint glimmer of a light, a short distance ahead, and a little to the left of the route he was following. He stopped to consider what it meant, for a single misstep at this stage was likely to undo all the good work of Lena-Wingo.

"I should like to know what that means. I don't know who could have started the fire, for the only one that I know of on this side the river is that of Colonel Butler, which is a long way off from here."

Meditation and speculation could not settle the question, and, after debating until he was weary, he concluded to approach a little closer, as it was easy to do so without being discovered. He was inclined to believe the fire had been kindled by his friend Jo, near the cavern, perhaps with the purpose of serving to guide him in his return thereto, though it seemed a piece of recklessness of which the young scout would not be

guilty, after the lessons he had learned in common with the rest of them.

When Ned had passed over something like half the intervening distance he paused again, with grave misgivings as to the wisdom of his course. The fire was seen more clearly, but there was nothing visible of those who had started it. It began to look as if it was a deserted camp fire, though he was more inclined than ever to suspect it was a sort of beacon light kindled by Jo, who knew better than to stay near enough to be seen by any of the Indians wandering in the woods. But determined to press the matter until he solved it, he continued advancing until, at last, when he came out from behind a tree, which had been in his way up to this time, he comprehended the whole thing. Could he believe the evidence of his own eyes?

It was the Tory and Indian camp from which he had fled almost an hour before!

The young scout was thunderstruck when he discovered the startling fact. For though he had bethought him of this danger at the moment of leaving the vicinity of the river, yet, as is the case with those placed in a similar situation, he was sure it was impossible for him to commit

such a blunder. But here were signs that could not be read amiss. There was the very fallen tree upon which he had seen Colonel Butler sit and smoke his pipe in moody silence. There was the other tree where he himself had sat with his head leaning against the trunk. And more still, there was the third tree which, with the fagots piled alongside, told its own story, with awful eloquence, of the fate which he had escaped.

But where were those who made these preparations for his death, when the rescue came in the shape of the avenging Mohawk? Nearly all were in the forest, searching for the one who had fled and the one whose cunning had released him. Ned saw two of the warriors sitting close to the flames, seemingly occupied in preparing the supper which had been so rudely interrupted by the proceedings described. This was so long before that they must have participated in the general hunt and pursuit, and had probably returned but a little while previous.

For a few minutes these two were all that the fugitive saw; but when his eyes became accustomed to the surroundings, he detected a third warrior seated half in darkness, apparently

looking complacently upon the labors of his comrades, while he smoked his pipe. Ned shifted his position slightly to learn whether the body of the Tory, Bagley, and the warrior lay where they had fallen. But a survey convinced him that they had been removed, though whether taken to any distance, or whether simply drawn back into the gloom, was more than he could tell, and about which he was not anxious to satisfy himself.

The whereabouts of Colonel Butler was the only question which interested him, after his first survey of the camp.

He was soon gratified in this respect, however, for while he was searching as best he could, and about ready to make up his mind that he, too, was on the hunt for the Mohawk, the colonel himself walked out of the darkness, and took his seat on the same fallen tree which he had occupied so long during that afternoon! He had the identical pipe between his lips, and he smoked it with a vigor which proved that his mind was in any but a restful state.

It may have been fancy, but Ned was almost certain, while looking in the countenance of the

great Tory, as it was revealed by the fire-light, that he could distinguish the marks of the heavy blow that had felled him to the ground. Perhaps the anxiety of the youth to see such a sight was one reason why he believed he detected it.

"I wonder how long he will be satisfied to keep this thing going?" thought Ned, while surveying the partially deserted camp. "He has met with nothing but defeat and disaster thus far, and has lost several of his most valuable allies. It looks to me that success is further off than ever."

Ned was held to the spot for several minutes by his interest in the notorious character who had persecuted him. But he soon aroused himself, stirred by the recollection of the value of the time which he was allowing to pass by. Another reminder of the folly of staying where he was came in the shape of the sound of a footstep behind him. This caused a flutter of his old fear, for he knew it was caused by one of the Iroquois, probably returning to camp. The youth crouched down and held his breath, when he detected the soft patter of the moccasins

upon the leaves, and knew there was more than one, and they were passing very near him. Waiting a few minutes he saw five warriors come to view near the camp fire, every one of whom had walked so close to him that he could have touched them with his outstretched arm.

CHAPTER IX.

FINDING A FRIEND.

Ned Clinton paused only long enough to make sure of the number of Iroquois warriors that had stalked by so near him, and to satisfy himself there were no more within touching distance, when he cautiously withdrew, and resumed his attempt to reach the cavern, where he believed that not only Rosa and her brother, but the Mohawk himself, were awaiting his return. Locating himself with still greater care than before, he had proceeded but a short distance when he came upon a land mark, which gave him more confidence than had been his since starting. There was no doubt now that he was following the right course, and, if nothing unforeseen occurred, he was sure to reach his destination in a short time.

At that hour the faint moon was in the sky, and he was able to make use of it as a means of avoiding the tendency to travel in the circuitous direction which had come so near proving

fatal a short time before. A quarter of an hour later, he struck the very tree where he had fallen into the hands of the Iroquois.

"A great deal has happened since then," he mused, "and I feel that a great deal more will take place in the next few hours. Lena-Wingo is confident that he will be able to conduct Rosa to Wilkesbarre before morning, and if he does, he must do some of the hardest work of his life."

He waited some time longer, and finally gave utterance to a soft whistle, such as he and Jo were accustomed to use when in the woods together.

"He may be somewhere in the neighborhood, and if he is, that will let him know where to look for me."

No response came to this call, and he had not much hope that there would be, but he repeated it.

"That was a little louder than before—hello!"

To his surprise and delight, a sound reached his ears like the faint echo of his own signal.

"That is Jo, as sure as I'm alive!"

He repeated the summons, still louder than

the second time. As before, the answer was returned, but it was barely audible.

"Jo is giving me a lesson in caution," concluded the young scout. "He knows that I need it."

The reply to his summons was so faint that he found it hard to tell the distance or the direction whence it came. He was convinced, however, that Jo knew where to look for him, and he had only to wait to be speedily joined by him. Ned remained quiet, after making the third summons, for he thought that if his friend wished to exercise so much care, he would do the same, and appeal to his lips only when necessary. For two or three minutes nothing more was heard.

During this period the fugitive did nothing but listen and reflect that, somehow or other, this tree seemed destined to play an important part in his history. It was there that he met the renegade, Dick Evans, who came so near effecting the capture of the three companions of Lena-Wingo. It was there, too, that Clinton, when on the point of making another observation, was taken prisoner, and now he was

calmly awaiting the approach of his friend, Jo Minturn.

Ned had reached this point in his reflections, with his ears strained to catch the first indication of the coming of his comrade, when the whistle fell upon his ear again, this time from a spot very near at hand, and almost immediately in front of where he stood. The young scout was in the act of replying when he asked himself the startling question whether it was not likely that this was some one else than Jo Minturn. He recalled the exceeding cunning of the Iroquois, and if Lena-Wingo was able to deceive them by false signals, was it not reasonable to suppose that they might do the same with him, who was much less accustomed to the ways of the denizens of the wood?

The apprehension of something of the kind struck him so powerfully, that he resolved not to reply to the last summons, but to wait and listen further. While doing so, he would hold himself in readiness to leap back into the cover of the wood, for it must not be forgotten that he was without any weapon with which to defend himself against the most insignificant foe. He was obliged to wait but a short time, when

the whistle was heard. There could be no doubt the person was close at hand.

Ned was unable to detect the slightest difference between the signal as made by Jo Minturn and that which now fell upon his ear. His hope was, therefore, strong that it was really his friend who was approaching. But he did not relax his determination to wait till all doubt was removed before he revealed himself. The last call was so distinct, that he knew precisely the point upon which to fix his gaze to determine whether it was a friend or an enemy who promised to show himself very soon.

He was gazing in this expectant, excited way, when in the gloom he detected a movement of the bushes in front, and almost at the same instant, the figure of a man stepped cautiously to view. The first glance told Ned that it was not Jo, but an Indian warrior. He held his breath, not daring to stir, through fear of betraying his hiding-place. But, the savage, instead of pausing, as if uncertain of the direction to take, continued stealing forward like a shadow of the night. What was worse, he was moving directly toward the spot where the affrighted Ned Clinton was crouching. When

only a few paces off, he stopped and made the whistle which had first been called out by the young fugitive himself.

The latter was still unable to discover any difference between it and that made by Joe many a time before. The fact of the Indian making it once more caused Ned to believe he was not certain whether he was on the right track, but the poor youth was fairly transfixed when the figure resumed its advance straight upon him. Ned was, as if held in the embrace of a nightmare, deprived of the capacity to move body or limb. Had he possessed a weapon with which to defend himself, the case would have been far different. But as it was, he was like the poor wretch who saw the walls of his prison slowly closing in upon him, without the power to stay the awful crush, and without the means of escaping therefrom.

"Young scout big fool—tell him make no noise, then he make noise—when he should make noise, then he make no noise."

And so it was Lena-Wingo! Ned shook off the overwhelming terror that had pressed him down, and desirous that his old friend should not know what a fright he had gone through,

stepped out as lightly as he knew how, and spoke in a matter-of-fact voice as he took the hand of the red scout:

"I wasn't quite clear that it was you, and I wanted to wait till I could find out before I showed where I was."

"Next time think of that before whistle."

But both were delighted to meet, and they talked very rapidly for several minutes, Lena-Wingo assuring his young friend that he need hold no fears of any of their enemies being within earshot. They hurriedly exchanged experiences, and then the Mohawk produced from the bushes behind him a rifle, which Ned found, upon the best examination he could make in the darkness, was not his own. But as that was gone beyond recovery, he was glad enough to secure the substitute.

Ned was anxious to learn what the Mohawk intended to do, as the night was well advanced, and time was precious. The reply of the scout was of the most satisfactory character. He had been interfered with while making his reconnoissance by the necessity of turning aside to help Ned out of his captivity, but he succeeded in

accomplishing all that he set out to do. He had found out the line by which Wilkesbarre could be entered, and he was now ready to make the attempt. All they had to do, then, was to go in search of Rosa and her brother, and that they proceeded to do without any delay.

CHAPTER X.

AN EMPTY CAVERN.

The Mohawk, agreed with Ned Clinton that they were likely to find Rosa and her brother near the cavern, if not inside of it, and they turned their footsteps in that direction. The Mohawk was in high glee, as was natural after having performed such a series of exploits, and he repeated his expressions of his ability to take the whole party into Wilkesbarre. The young scout could not but catch the contagion of his spirits, and concluded that he must have hit upon some kind of "underground railroad," by which the thing was to be done without any power on the part of the Iroquois to prevent.

They made their way as if there was no such thing as a hostile Indian within a hundred miles of them, not even pausing to listen for suspicious sounds, a practice to which the Mohawk had hitherto showed an inclination, even when the danger seemed less than on the present occasion. The red scout evidently knew

the territory through which he was journeying as well as the people themselves. While they progressed, the faint moon ascended higher in the heavens, and since the sky was without a cloud, the light was quite an assistance. As they were constantly reaching a higher plane, they were tempted to look back over and down upon the broad stretch of forest through which they had just come. On one of these occasions they saw the glimmer of a camp fire at no great distance. The Mohawk immediately halted and viewed it with such interest that Ned was struck with curiosity.

"That must be Colonel Butler's camp," said the young scout.

"No—his be there," replied the Indian, pointing in a direction almost at right angles to where his companion supposed it was.

"Who is there, then?"

"Lena-Wingo try find out."

This was equivalent to declaring that he did not know who could have kindled a camp fire in so public a manner as that. For a few minutes Ned dreaded that the Indian was on the point of going off to reconnoitre the strange camp, and thus delay their own arrival at the cavern,

which was now close at hand. But if the red scout had held such a purpose, he changed his mind, and pushed on in the direction of the retreat.

"Did you satisfy yourself as to who they are?" asked Ned.

"Iroquois," was the answer of the Mohawk.

This was disturbing news, for it was hardly expected up to this time that the redmen had followed the fugitives, or had established a camp so close to the cavern. Ned noticed from the actions of his guide that he was somewhat disturbed over the discovery, for he advanced with more caution, and often paused to look back and listen, as if apprehensive of being followed by some of his old enemies. But they were so near the cavern that within the next ten minutes they reached the spot, and halted at the memorable place where the young man had bidden farewell for the time to the idol of his heart.

All was as still as the grave, when the two paused outside the entrance and listened. The pile of stones overgrown with shrubbery and vegetation was barely seen in the dim light, though enough was visible for Ned to recognize the retreat. The youth was in a distressful frame

of mind, for, somehow or other, ever since the sight of the camp fire below, an impression had been growing upon him that something had gone wrong with Rosa and her brother during the absence of himself and the Mohawk. This fear increased as they drew near the hiding-place, until, when they halted in front of the door, he could hardly conceal his agitation.

"I suppose she is asleep, because it is quite late," remarked Ned, endeavoring to speak in a matter-of-fact tone.

Lena-Wingo made no answer but was peering at the stone as well as he could in the gloom, for the fact that it was drawn aside, as if left thus by some one who had gone within, was not a very satisfactory proof of caution on the part of that individual, but he made no comment upon it. It may have been he was becoming so accustomed to such impudence, that he felt no surprise when he encountered signs of its repetition.

The Mohawk did not enter the cavern, but contented himself with kneeling down and applying his ear to the opening so cautiously that no one inside could be aware of what he was doing. Ned supposed this was an attempt to detect the

presence or absence of Rosa through his power of hearing. If such were the fact, it was not conclusive, for when it had continued several minutes the Mohawk abruptly straightened up and looked about at Ned in so incomprehensible a way that the latter asked:

"Is she there?"

"Don't know—Lena-Wingo see."

He disappeared through the narrow opening, leaving the youth on the outside awaiting his return with an anxiety difficult to describe.

"It is wonderful the way this thing goes along," mused the youth, as the old fear that they were trying to do something beyond their power came over him. "It seems for awhile that everything progresses so well that we are sure to go straight into Wilkesbarre with flying colors, when presto! there turns up, just when no one is expecting it, something which threatens to knock everything topsy-turvy, and not only keep us from reaching the place we've set out for, but is likely to trip every one of us—excepting the Mohawk, of course. He has done more work than all of us together, and yet I don't believe there was ever a time when he was in one quarter of the danger that the rest

have been. It all goes to prove that there is a right and wrong way of doing everything, and he has learned his trade so well that he is master of it."

Every once in a while he paused in his meditation to listen for something going on within. The fears of the youth were as great as ever, and it was hard to fight against the conviction that there was ground to fear the descent of some evil upon Rosa Minturn.

"If she is in there she is awake or asleep. If awake she would have found us out before this, and if asleep, the ear of Lena-Wingo would have heard her breathing, though it is soft as that of an infant."

And under the belief that he was able to do the same, and desirous of ending his painful suspense, Ned crept as close to the opening as he could, and applied his ear for some proof of what was passing within. It was not a very encouraging result, inasmuch as he heard nothing at all, though it was certain that one person was there, with some grounds to hope there were two.

"If I can't hear the warrior, I can't hear the lady," was the conclusion of Ned, when he had

kept up the experiment long enough to decide it. "The only thing that I can do is to wait till Lena-Wingo comes out and tells his story, but it takes him a long while to learn whether any one is in the cavern besides himself."

Still waiting and listening, Ned was able to catch a sound now and then, as if made by some one moving about near the entrance.

This he supposed came from the Mohawk, who was following his own system of investigating the department of the interior.

A few seconds after, the scout joined him.

"Is she there?" was the husky question of Ned Clinton.

"No," replied Lena-Wingo, in an impressive voice; "*the gal is gone.*"

CHAPTER XI.

A STEALTHY FOE.

ALTHOUGH Ned Clinton was expecting such information, the shock almost crushed him to the ground. After the terrible perils and difficulties through which he had fought, and the thorough reconnoissance of the Mohawk, resulting in the opening of a way into Wilkesbarre, they seemed doomed to fail in the very place where they deemed themselves the strongest. Rosa was gone, and who should say where she was, as well as where her brother had placed himself at the moment when both were needed?

Ned, as might be supposed, proceeded to question the Mohawk as closely as he knew how as to what he had learned by his exploration of the cavern. It amounted to nothing. Lena-Wingo had little hope of finding her there, at the time he went in, but there was the possibility that she had discovered the approach of some one, and was hiding in some corner of the apartment, suppressing her breath so that the

ear could detect no pulsation of the still atmosphere. The way to determine the matter was for Lena-Wingo to steal around with the silence of a shadow into every portion of the cavern, which was what he had done, making his examination so complete that there was no room for mistake in the conclusion. Rosa Minturn was not there!

Then Ned attempted to draw from the Mohawk his theory as to what had become of her, but the scout was disposed to say nothing until he completed other investigations. That Jo Minturn was gone seemed to cause very little, if any, apprehension on the part of either of the searchers. The impression with Ned was that brother and sister were not together. He believed the brother had stayed on the outside of the cavern, as he proposed doing when the friends separated, that he might the better keep watch for the coming of their enemies. He had probably remained in this position till dark, when he came back to the retreat, and then—

It was plain to the youth that the Mohawk was uneasy. The presence of the camp fire at so short a distance, in connection with the disappearance of the girl, was ground enough for

misgiving of the most distressing nature. The natural theory that suggested itself to Ned was that Jo had detected signs which led him to doubt the safety of the cavern as a place of retreat, and he had withdrawn his sister therefrom. Whether he succeeded in doing so was a question which must remain in doubt until the Mohawk should clear it up for him. If this theory was the true one, there was reason to hope that Jo and Rosa were hiding somewhere at no great distance, and if that were the fact, it would not require Lena-Wingo a long time to effect a junction with them.

It is useless to attempt to name a tenth of the fancies that thronged through the brain of the young man in explanation of the absence of his two friends. Several times he was confident he had struck the true explanation, but just on the point of telling Lena-Wingo how it all was some fatal defect would suggest itself and keep his mouth closed. The action of the Mohawk was singular, even for him, who guided his conduct by no set rule. After coming from the cavern, and answering the question of the youth he walked aside a few paces, so that his figure was hardly discernible in the gloom. There he

leaned upon his rifle in the attitude of one engaged in deep thought, which was indeed the case. Thus it was that Ned was left free to indulge in all those speculations to which we have referred, with the result that he could form no reasonable theory to account for the disappearance of his friends.

But Lena-Wingo was not long in making up his mind upon a question like that which now agitated him. If he was unable to settle the query himself, he hit on some way of finding a clue. He had held the attitude described but a few minutes, when he straightened up with something like a sigh, and walked silently to where the youth was awaiting him.

"Me go to camp fire—wait here—don't make noise."

Ned promised obedience, and the savage vanished immediately. He could not free himself of the belief, judging from the action of Lena-Wingo, that the latter suspected that Rosa Minturn had fallen by some mishap into the power of the Iroquois — a calamity which made the youth shudder more than the prospect of death which impended over him a short time before.

"What does he mean by going out to look at his kinsmen gathered about that camp fire, unless it is that he suspects the poor girl may be there? He would not do that unless he held a strong suspicion."

It will be seen that the situation had become such that Ned was in as painful and apprehensive a state of mind as is conceivable. No position is more trying than that of being compelled to wait indefinitely for the coming of some one upon whom depends the success of a most important movement. As the minutes dragged slowly by, without anything being seen or heard of the Mohawk, the young man found it hard to suppress his impatience.

"It must be near midnight," he muttered, after finding he was mistaken again in fancying he heard the soft step of the warrior, "and if he is not here pretty soon, the escape goes over for another twenty-four hours, and, mixed up as we are with the Iroquois all around, and hunting high and low, that means that we won't get there at all."

Ned paused and inclined his ear again.

"I wonder if that can be Lena-Wingo that I have heard a half dozen times? There is some

one or something out there, and it may be he, though I shouldn't think he would try any of his jokes, now that we have no time to indulge in them."

The possibility of a foe lurking close at hand made Ned Clinton exceedingly cautious in his movements. But now that he held a loaded gun in his hands he was in no such apprehensive state as when the Mohawk stole down upon him. A few minutes of waiting told him there was some one near, though the evidences of his proximity were so guarded, as yet, that he could not determine the precise point to look for his appearance.

"If there is but one of them, and he is hunting for me, I don't care if he finds me," concluded Ned, listening intently for the first sign that would tell him exactly where to expect the appearance of the enemy.

A remote suspicion came to him that it might be Jo Minturn, after all, who was moving around in this cautious manner in remembrance of the lessons that had been taught them all within the last few days. Ah! how he wished that such was the fact; for he was yearning for

some clue to the whereabouts of his lost friends, and if Jo would only show himself, it would not be long before his sister would be with them, and then would come the end of this suspense and danger. A few minutes after, he was able to locate the point where the stranger was stealing toward him.

CHAPTER XII.

A CURIOUS COMBAT.

It was perhaps not a singular coincidence that the Indian appeared in the densest portion of the undergrowth, at the precise spot where Ned Clinton was expecting he would show himself. It was natural that a red scout, in stealing upon a foe, should avail themself of all the shelter within his reach, though it was a question with the youth as to whether this warrior could be aware of his position, inasmuch as he had not materially shifted it since the departure of the Mohawk. But there he was; there could be no question about that, and Ned prepared for his coming.

The movements of the savage were so cautious that the young scout would never have detected them had he not been on the watch, and had not his suspicion been turned directly to the point. Ned stood like a statue, his eye fixed upon the spot where he knew the Indian to be, with his own rifle held so that it could be

pointed and fired at an instant's notice. It was not long after that, in the gloom, the figure of a crouching warrior began assuming form, and as soon as Ned could distinguish it quite clearly, he saw that it was not Lena-Wingo, the Mohawk. The warrior was not tall enough for that.

There remained for one moment the hope that it might be his friend Jo Minturn, the height being such as to warrant that assumption, but when it had drawn a little closer, this hope was dissipated. A strange, and consequently hostile, Indian was advancing upon him. Ned still inclined to the belief that the warrior was not really aware what an armed foe stood directly before him, for his action exposed him to a fatal shot whenever the youth chose to fire it.

At the the time the savage came into view, less than a dozen yards were between the two, from which it will be seen that Ned Clinton could have shot him at any instant without anything more than raising and firing his gun. But there was something in such an act that was too shocking for the youth to undertake, and he held his weapon so that it could be called into service the instant needed, but refrained from

doing anything more until necessary as a matter of self-defense.

"I'll wait till there is no helping it," was his thought. "For to shoot a man that way, without giving him a warning, isn't the fair thing."

The actions of the warrior were peculiar, and not understood by the young scout who was watching him. After issuing from the undergrowth, he walked quite rapidly until he had passed half-way across the open space, when he stopped, as if something suspicious had struck his ear. Ned supposed at first that he had detected his danger, but a moment's reflection convinced him that such was not the case, for the youth was certain he had not stirred a muscle since the appearance of the Indian, and he was sure that he was so screened by the darkness that an owl itself would not be able to see him. What it was, therefore, that was the cause of his stopping in that abrupt fashion was more than could be surmised.

But Ned could not help reflecting on the fact that he had the Indian completely at his mercy, and should he so conclude, nothing could avail to stay the fatal shot. He was standing before him, in the attitude of intense attention, offer-

ing a target which a child could not have missed. But the Iroquois was safe, for Ned Clinton was too much of a Christian to make war in that fashion.

While the youth was wondering and speculating as to what the business of the Indian was, and what was likely to be his next step, he was startled to observe a shadowy figure issue from the point in the undergrowth on the left and behind the warrior, and move toward him. The first look at the height of this second figure left no doubt of its identity. It was Lena-Wingo, who was "going for" the Iroquois with a vengeance, and no mistake.

With such absolute silence did the Mohawk proceed, that, although his foe was standing still and listening, he heard nothing of him. The red scout did not hesitate, having started on his mission, but, with the stealthy, gliding movement of the serpent, he headed straight for the unconscious warrior. The next instant, with a panther-like bound, he landed upon his shoulders, and bore the Iroquois helplessly to the ground. Attacked in this manner, and caught at such disadvantage, it will be seen that the Mohawk was master of the situation.

He could have slain an enemy of twice the strength and skill, when assailing him in this manner. And yet the undermost Indian escaped without a scratch!

Lena-Wingo was in an angry mood, due to the suspicion that the warrior was one of those who had discovered the hiding-place of Rosa Minturn and taken her away. He bore him resistlessly to the earth, and was about to drive his hunting-knife home—for he was too maddened to feel any compunction about doing so—when the victim gave utterance to an exclamation which arrested the uplifted arm. There was something in the voice, or rather, some peculiarity of action on the part of the vanquished, which raised a suspicion in the mind of the Mohawk, who instantly loosened his hold and pronounced a name. The answer was satisfactory. The deadly grip was loosened the instant after, and the two rose side by side and walked away in the darkness like a couple of friends, as indeed they were.

To explain the curious proceeding, we have only to tell our readers that the warrior who thus escaped impending death was the one that had come upon Rosa Minturn and Lena-Wingo

when they were in hiding from the Iroquois during the early stages of the journey to Wilkesbarre, and who spared them and succeeded in drawing others from the immediate vicinity. A friendly act of that kind could not be forgotten by the Mohawk, who sheathed his knife the instant the suspicion of the warrior's identity entered his mind.

Clinton, fortunately for his own mental balance, suspected the true state of the case from the action of the combatants, having learned of the curious favors the Mohawk had received when there was seemingly no escape for them and his companions. But he was amazed at the subsequent action of Lena-Wingo, who, having walked off with his man, stayed for a time with him!

"He might have excused himself for a second," growled the youth, "so as to come to me and tell me whether he is likely to be along this way before morning; but now I have only to keep up my watching and waiting till the cows come home."

Reflection convinced the youth that something was likely to result from this action of the Mohawk, who, having taken the arm, so to

speak, of his enemy, might gain valuable information from him. The only question was whether it would be in time to prove of practical benefit to those concerned. The night was wearing away, and unless a start should be made within a couple of hours at the most, Ned did not believe it possible to do anything in that direction before the succeeding night.

For some cause or other, the white youth had settled into the belief that the only time in which the Mohawk meant to make his grand attempt was during the darkness—a plan to which the red scout had not fully committed himself.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE YOUNG SCOUTS.

NED was not doomed to as tedious a wait as he anticipated after the departure of the Mohawk with his newly found friend or enemy, as the case might be. He had worked himself into as dismal a mood as was possible, when his interest was roused once more by the sound of some one approaching the place where he was standing.

"I suppose the Mohawk has talked the fellow out, and will come back and treat me to a dose of the same medicine—hello! It isn't he!"

Nor was it an Indian, either, but no less a person than Jo Minturn, the very one for whom the young scout was looking and yearning with all the affection of his nature. Jo was making his way as though expecting the appearance of no friend or enemy, though he exercised the caution that had been taught him since undertaking the rôle of scout. Ned did not wait after making sure of his friend, but with a single bound caught his hand in a fervent grasp.

"Well, Jo, my old boy! Where have you been? What have you been doing? Where is Rosa? Why have you kept us waiting so long?"

As soon as Jo could catch his breath and identify his companion, he returned the pressure and greeting with interest.

"Well, Ned, my dear fellow! I never expected to see you alive! You are as one risen from the dead! Let's shake again!"

"And what led you to have such fears about me?" asked Ned, as he heartily responded to the suggestion of his comrade.

"Why shouldn't I, when I saw you a captive with the Iroquois?"

"Ah! If you knew about *that*, I don't blame you for having such thoughts of my future, for I felt myself that all was about up. But I didn't suppose you were in the neighborhood."

"I wouldn't have been if it were not for Rosa."

"How was that?"

"She insisted that you ought to be away no longer than an hour at the most, and when that time passed, she was so alarmed that she would give me no peace till I had gone out to

find whether there was anything up with you or not."

"Was she the cause of your going?"

"Most certainly she was, for I didn't believe you were in the least danger and only went to please her."

The listener was thrilled with pleasure at hearing this, for it had not entered his head that the young lady was so interested in his welfare as all that. He was too absorbed in his own happiness to know or notice that his good friend took pains to impress the fact on him. But the wish of Ned to prevent any one suspecting his secret led him to hurry with his questions and with the imparting of information.

"It was very kind in Rosa to show such interest in me, and you learned that I was in need of help, which, thank Heaven, I got."

"So it seems, or you wouldn't be here. It was the Mohawk, of course?"

"Yes; he succeeded in mixing up things in so bewildering a way, that all I had to do was to leave, which I did, without waiting to say good-bye."

THE MEETING OF NED AND JOE.—Page 93.

"I went down to the tree, here, where it seems all your most exciting experiences must start, and I was on the point of going back, when it struck me that I had a good chance of trailing you, inasmuch as we have been studying that profession for the last few days whenever we could get a chance, and this was a fine opening for another trial. So I went at it, walked slowly, and making sure of every step, till, before I had gone very far, you can imagine what my feelings were when I found you were actually a prisoner in the hands of a party of Iroquois. I tried to think I was mistaken, but the signs were too plain to allow me, and I kept at it till I got sight of you among a band of them. There isn't any use, Ned, of my telling how I felt about that time, for neither you nor I knew where the Mohawk was, nor whether he was likely to learn your fix before hours after your death. I couldn't see any way to help you, and I was afraid to go back to Rosa with the story, for it would have broken her heart.

"The only thing I could think of was Lena-Wingo. He was the sole living man that could do anything for you, and, though I had no idea

of where he was to be found, I started to make the hunt for him.

"I was afraid the time for this would be so long that Rosa would become worried about me, so I slipped back to the cavern, and told her I wouldn't be back till after dark, and she needn't have any fear for me. She was willing to do that, for I can tell you she was dreadfully worried about you, though I don't see why she should have been, when you have gone off for a much longer time without her thinking anything was wrong.

"It must be," added the brother, philosophically, "that women can feel when there is anything wrong. But I started back, and when I reached the place where you had been in camp you were not to be seen. I didn't know but that they had killed you, and I was frightened, I can tell you, for there wasn't any way for me to find out.

"I had heard a gun or two before I got there, and after looking around and hunting up the matter as well as I could, it struck me that you were dead—killed by the Iroquois—and I started back to tell Rosa. I couldn't be in much of a hurry, and I poked along all I could, till I made

up my mind that the sooner it was over the better, and I was near the cavern when I found you, or rather, you found me."

"Are you on your way to the cavern now?"

"I am. Where is the Mohawk? And, while you are about it, let me know how it was you got out of the scrape?"

Ned Clinton related, as briefly as he could, the manner in which he had succeeded in making his way to this place, the particulars of which have already been told our readers. But a new fear had grown in the mind of the young scout, and the instant he had satisfied the curiosity of his friend, he added the information that Lena-Wingo, the Mohawk, had entered the cavern and examined it, with the result of learning that no one was there. Jo was naturally alarmed, but not so much so as Ned, for he believed his sister was somewhere in the neighborhood, and would be found without difficulty.

"I think she has seen or heard something that has led her to look on the cavern as not as safe as we supposed, and she has taken up her quarters somewhere near at hand. Did you signal to her in any way?"

"I don't recollect that we did."

"I should think the Mohawk would have done that. If we go back and try it, the chances are she will be found pretty soon."

"The scout told me to wait here till he returned, and it will hardly do to go off until he shows himself."

This was in accordance with the resolution made by the youths after several of their slips, and, anxious as they were to hunt up the missing one, Jo could not urge his friend to forget his agreement. A compromise was struck, after consultation, it being arranged that Jo should return to the cavern, while Ned would await the coming of the Mohawk, as he was instructed to do. This was done, and, as may be imagined, Ned found his task one of the most irksome of his life, as he could view it in no other light than that of a total waste of time.

"I wish I could believe Jo is right," he mused; "but all the probabilities point the other way. It is hard to understand why it was the Mohawk did not signal to Rosa; but he wouldn't have been apt to stay away as long as this if he hadn't reason to believe she is somewhere among the Indians. That camp fire down the mountain indicates the same thing,

and then when he picked up that warrior after knocking him down, he got something from him which has sent him off on some other hunt, while I am compelled to stay here, doing nothing, and without the least idea of what is going on around me."

This was not the most comforting situation that can be imagined, but the youth having resolved to stay there and await the return of the Mohawk, stuck to the duty with the firmness of a martyr. At the end of a full round hour, the Mohawk came back, with his stealthy tread, not being heard before he stood beside the young scout.

But Lena-Wingo was alone, and he had nothing to tell of Rosa.

CHAPTER XIV.

A STRANGE DISCOVERY.

THE prospect grew darker and darker.

"No good—girl gone—won't find her," said the Indian.

At the same time the warrior turned in the direction of the cavern, and led the way, with the young scout by his side. Approaching the retreat, the Mohawk told all that his companion wanted to know, and all that he had to tell him. Between the scout and the Iroquois whom he had spared because of favors received from him, there was a certain chivalrous consideration which prevented Lena-Wingo using him to that extent which Ned expected. Nothing had passed between them regarding the whereabouts of Rosa, Lena-Wingo asking no question, and the Iroquois vouchsafing no information, so that they parted with no additional wisdom regarding the missing one on the part of the Mohawk.

The latter, as might be supposed, had reconnoitered the camp fire to which reference has been made, and found that three Indians belonging, as it seemed, to a party which had crossed the Susquehanna subsequently to the rest were engaged in preparing supper, preliminary to uniting with the main company. The actions of this group showed, too, that they must have come over within a few hours, and knew nothing of what had taken place in the meantime, so that little if anything was to be obtained from them. It took several hours for the Mohawk to satisfy himself fully on this point, after which he went ahead of them to where the main party with whom he had had the skirmish described were encamped. Here he saw Colonel Butler and the leading Iroquois, though the larger number of the latter were absent in the forest, on the search for the Mohawk and fugitives.

It being evident that Rosa was not in the custody of the Tory leader, Lena-Wingo went back to consult with young Clinton. It seemed to the latter that the story told by his dusky friend ought to afford encouragement, and he so stated, but the Indian did not accept it in that light. As was generally the case, when

things were not moving to suit him, Lena-Wingo was moody and uncommunicative, and he did not take the trouble to explain the strange thoughts that came into his mind.

Ned knew he was working upon some well-laid plan, and he was filled with the gravest fears for the one to whom he was so tenderly attached. Where she was, or what had become of her, was more than the youth could conjecture. It struck him that if she was not in the hands of the Tory, she was likely to be within reach of her friends; but when he made the suggestion to Lena-Wingo, he shook his head to signify he held a different and more disheartening theory. Then Ned related what Jo said about the signaling to her, and, to his surprise, the Mohawk replied that he had done so more than once, without producing the slightest result. This reply left the young man in despair again.

When the destination was reached they were not kept waiting for the coming of Jo Minturn. He was looking for them, and went forward to greet them. As he did so his manner told the whole story. He had not been able to gain the

least knowledge of his sister, and was in the deepest distress.

It was touching to hear his appeal to the Mohawk to find and restore the dear one to him, declaring that it would break the hearts of her parents unless she was given back to them. Ned felt that he might have added that the heart of another would suffer beyond imagination, but thought it best to hold his peace for the time. Lena-Wingo listened to the appeal in silence, and made no answer—an unfavorable omen, as the young scouts interpreted it.

Of course it was out of the question to make the entry into Wilkesbarre that night. Daylight was close at hand, and, were the missing one found within the next ten minutes, not enough of darkness remained to allow them to reach the fortifications—that is, as it seemed to the young men themselves.

"Is there nothing you can do?" asked the stricken brother, resolved to wring some reply from the Indian.

The Mohawk was leaning on his rifle in a customary attitude, and he stood as if he heard not the query addressed to him.

"Wait till he is through his thinking," said Ned, in an undertone, sympathizing with the anguish of his young friend, aside from his own sorrow over the absence of Rosa.

Jo restrained his impatience until the Mohawk straightened up, when the question was put again.

"Yes—do something," was the reply of the warrior. "Work hard—find her—won't take long—soon get girl—wait till morning."

"That is what I expected," said Ned. "The whole thing is thrown forward another twenty-four hours."

"I care not if it be for twenty-four days, if it results in finding her," said the brother, who was suffering such mental anguish that he could not hold his peace. "I have been through and through that cavern," he added, speaking to Ned, "until there is not a corner in it that is not as familiar to me as the rooms in our own house at home, hoping that she might have fallen asleep in some spot overlooked in the former search, but it was all of no avail."

"You might have known that, when the Mohawk preceded you in the hunt," said Clinton.

"The only way by which I can explain it is, that while we were gone, some straggling Indian has stumbled upon the place and taken her away."

"It may be that she found her situation so threatening that she came out voluntarily, and has taken refuge in the woods, wandering so far off that she is beyond the reach of our signal."

"Such is the most favorable view that we can take, but, somehow or other, I cannot believe we shall meet her again."

"Don't be ready to despair so soon, Jo. We have had so many deliverances that we ought not to doubt the hand of God will be stretched forth again to save her."

"What does Lena-Wingo mean by saying that we must wait till morning?"

"It is known that Rosa is gone. When daylight comes, the Mohawk will be able to solve the mystery. She could not depart without leaving behind her evidences which will tell the story, and we must wait till the coming of the day for him to read those signs aright."

"Then we shall not have to wait long."

"No. There are already signs of morning breaking."

"I dread to hear what he tells us."

"You are less hopeful than I," said Ned.

"But not less so than the Mohawk himself."

"It is hard to tell what he thinks."

The two friends watched the advent of the day, hardly exchanging another word until the growing light showed that the sun at last was above the horizon. Then their eyes naturally turned to the Mohawk for his solution of the mystery. As before, he was leaning on his gun, merged in the same depth of thought. Impatient as they were, they did not venture to disturb him until he was ready to look up and take note of what was passing round him.

He did so shortly, and without saying a word proceeded to make another examination of the cavern when he had the daylight at his elbow. Skilled and experienced as he was in woodcraft, it took him but a short time to solve the problem. Then it was that the Mohawk made known that Rosa Minturn had been driven away, but not by fear of Indians.

CHAPTER XV.

A DISTURBANCE IN SLEEP.

When Rosa bade her friends good-bye and entered the cavern, she was in as high hopes and ardent spirits as they. To her, it seemed, that in a few more hours, at most, they would enter Wilkesbarre, and end all persecution and danger. She was left alone for a considerable time in the cavern, none of her friends supposing that peril could come to her so long as she remained there, nor had Rosa herself any apprehensions. When she found herself alone in the retreat, with the prospect of waiting an indefinite period, she resumed her position on the couch, intending to obtain a few more hours of sleep, before starting on the journey for Wilkesbarre. At the end of an hour a drowsiness began stealing over her, and as the stillness was unbroken, she soon dropped into unconsciousness.

The sleep was not profound, and it needed but a slight cause to break it, as was soon proved.

The major part of an hour had gone by, when Rosa's senses came back to her. She learned at once that some one was at the mouth of the cavern. The noise was slight—such as would be made by any one trying to open the door without betraying himself—and she listened intently for a minute or two without stirring.

She was not frightened, for she was quite sure that it was one of her friends making his way into the shelter, his purpose, no doubt, being to avoid any noise, after learning she was asleep. The impression was strong that some one had been calling her by name, which she believed was the cause of her awaking. But, as she had given back no response, he or they were entering to learn the cause.

"I suppose it's Jo," she thought; though it may be that Ned, and possibly Lena-Wingo, are with him, and they are tired of calling to me, and mean to open the door themselves. Well, I'm glad of it, and hope they are all here."

The movement and noise continued for some seconds more, during which no fear entered the mind of Rosa that any one could be the cause excepting a friend of her own. Listening a brief time in this manner she called out:

"Is that you, Jo."

The noise ceased, as if the person had caught the sound of the voice without detecting the words.

"Is that you, Jo, or Ned, or Lena-Wingo?" repeated the girl, in tones so loud she was sure they must have reached their ears.

All was still: there was no reply to the summons. For the first time, a fear came over her, and the suspicion flashed across her mind that it was not a friend who was seeking entrance into the cavern! The suspicion came so suddenly that for a moment she was unable to move or speak.

Then, as she regained control of her thoughts, the dreadful suspicion returned with overwhelming force. After all, the cavern had been discovered by the Indians, who were stealing in after her. Possibly it was Colonel Butler himself, or some of his Tory allies.

The silence which succeeded her hail of the parties continued but a few seconds, when the noise was heard again. The poor girl bewailed her error in summoning the party as she had done, but regrets could avail nothing, and through her brain ran the torturing question

whether there was any way of averting the impending calamity. It seemed to her that the sound which fell upon her ear was not that which would be made by one seeking to force his way into the cavern. It is hard to tell the precise character of the noise that had aroused her, but it suggested that some one was tugging at the stone which she found moved so easily. Besides this, the labor was continued longer than appeared natural. Why it was necessary that a man should toil and labor with a "door" which was not fastened was more than she could understand.

The only plan that suggested itself to the distressed girl was for her to steal up close to the opening and wait until the Indian should effect an entrance and then endeavor to slip out unobserved. This was as fearful a task as she could impose on herself, but Rosa possessed the courage to make the attempt, if the opportunity should be afforded her. With a prayer to Heaven for help, she rose, and while the noise at the entrance continued, crept as near to it as was advisable, and crouched down in silence.

Once more it struck her that there was something singular in the manner of her enemy, who

appeared to be toiling at the opening in a blind, aimless way, as if at a loss to comprehend how he was to get into the place after discovering it. This caused her no thrill of hope, for she could not believe that the enemy would give up and go away, after hearing the voice of the very one for whom he was searching within the cavern. By leaning forward, and peering toward the opening, she was able to catch the faint background of the sky. At the same time she saw the movement of something thrown against it, which she concluded must be the Indian endeavoring to force his way inside. For a time the only result of this scrutiny on her part was the conviction that, instead of two or three Indians, she had but a single one to encounter.

CHAPTER XVI.

AN UNWELCOME VISITOR.

THE interior of the cavern was in darkness, for not a ray of light found its way in after sunset. Consequently, Rosa was secure from observation so long as her enemy brought no light with him, but it was not to be supposed that she could elude him in an exploration of the place. Her purpose was to wait where she was in perfect silence till sure the savage had passed, when she hoped to slip out and reach the shelter of the woods before he could overtake her. As it was the only thing that presented itself, Rosa remained unfaltering in her determination to attempt it.

The time was short, but the seconds were of interminable length to the waiting girl. She had braced her nerves for the effort, when all at once it occurred to her that whatever the agency at work at the opening of the cavern, its conduct was different from that of a man. The suspicion had no more than entered her mind, when the enemy emitted a growl which told the whole

story, and showed her that the threatened danger was of another character than what she had supposed.

It was not an Indian, but a *black bear*, that was seeking to effect an entrance into the retreat.

For one instant Rosa did not know whether to be relieved or not at the discovery, but the peril was of that immediate nature that a change was necessary in the plan she had formed to escape it. The bear would be guided more by the sense of smell than by that of sight, and was not apt to pass by her and afford the chance for her to slip out as she had intended, nor would the darkness prove of any service.

As these reflections passed through the mind of the girl, a chilling terror crept over her, for it seemed there was no escape except by the interposition of Heaven. She had no weapon, and it really looked as if there was nothing which she could do. But Rosa Minturn was not the one to give up in a contest, no matter what its nature, without doing all that was possible. Certain that the worst course was to stay where she was, she hurried back to her former station by the cot where she lay sleeping at the time she

was awakened by the sound of Bruin at the entrance.

It struck her as strange that a brute of the size and strength of the bear should be baffled so long, when her own power was able to draw the stone aside without difficulty. She concluded that the obstruction which served the purpose of a door had become displaced in some way, so that the paws of the creature were unable to secure a hold upon them. As she reached the refuge, her foot struck an obstruction and at the same instant she ejaculated:

"Thank God!"

The object encountered was the broad, flat stone which covered the underground passage that had been shown her by Lena-Wingo, the Mohawk. Not until her foot came in contact with it did she recall that this means of escape was at her command. No time was to be lost.

The ejaculation was scarcely uttered, when a heavy sound at the mouth of the cavern told her that the bear had entered! Without hesitation, Rosa stooped and seized the edge of the large stone. It proved heavier than she anticipated, but the occasion was one that made her strength greater than ever before, and the cover-

ing was raised with little trouble. She had not seen what was below the trap-door, as it might be called, and at any other time she would have hesitated before entering the tunnel in the blank darkness. But delay meant embrace in the arms of the bear, whose "hugging" was certain to be fatal. Without a second's pause she placed herself beneath the stone, careful to see that it was replaced in position over her head.

She could not feel that as yet she was safe against the bear, as it would be natural for him to follow her. But she had made her way only a short distance along the tunnel, when she became satisfied that the opening was so narrow that it would be impossible for the brute to pursue her. This was a great relief, and she began threading the passage with the care and caution of one traveling a strange road at night.

The tunnel was of the most primitive nature, being simply an underground hole, not walled or protected in any manner. In the course of time a great deal of earth had fallen in, and the task of making her way through it to the outer entrance was not a slight one. But she could

not think of returning to the cavern where she believed the bear had taken up his quarters for the night. Accordingly, she persevered, and gradually neared the outlet, which was reached after frequent pauses, caused by the falling in of the earthen walls of the passage.

When she found herself at last at the end of the underground journey, with the other flat stone above her head, she placed her hands against the lower side and shoved it aside without trouble. Here she naturally paused for a moment or two, fearing that there might be a bear on the outside as well as inside the cavern. Looking around as well as she could in the gloom she detected nothing of an alarming nature, and carefully climbed to the upper surface of the earth again.

"Very well," she said to herself, with something of her natural humor; "if a big black bear has made up his mind to stay all night in that place, I will make up my mind to stay out of it."

Her greatest distress just then was the soiling her clothing had received from her contact with the dirt in the underground trip to the outer world. But this was more of the nature of

dust, and after a little vigorous brushing, she freed herself almost entirely from it—enough, at any rate, to restore the composure of her mind. So far she had certainly been fortunate, and it would seem that she had no very difficult task in arranging for the manner in which the rest of the night should be spent.

"Jo and Ned will come back to the cavern to look for me," she reflected, "and it will not do to go so far off that they will have trouble in finding me."

No conclusion could be more correct than this, and the pity was that it was not carried out in spirit and letter, as she meant that it should be. It was not very agreeable to spend a few hours in the open air in the darkness, after the call she had received from the bear, and in view of the fact that she had no weapons with which to defend herself. The fact that one bear had made his appearance was presumptive evidence that others were likely to come, and this in turn was the cause of the fair fugitive resolving to spend the few hours of waiting at a little distance from the cavern.

CHAPTER XVII.

ALL ADRIFT.

Rosa was confirmed in the wisdom of her decision by the noise of something like the tread of another wild animal. She did not stop to investigate the nature of this new-comer on the scene, but made as hasty a withdrawal from the spot as was consistent with silence. She half expected the wild beast would start in pursuit, in which case her only resource would be to take to a tree—a resource to which she had fled more than once before in the woods. When she paused in her brief flight, to listen to sounds of pursuit, there was nothing of an alarming nature, and she thanked Heaven that she had been permitted to escape.

The point where she halted in her flight was, perhaps, two hundred yards from the cavern, and in the midst of the forest, which at that day lined both sides of the Susquehanna. She was liable to go astray as to the location of her former shelter which she looked upon as the

headquarters of the party. The most prudent thing was to stay where she was until the arrival of her friends or the breaking of day. Her distance from the cavern was not too great for her to hear their signals when they should reach it, and she could then readily rejoin them.

Such would have been her course, but for an occurrence that ought to have influenced her differently. She was searching for some place where she could spend an hour or two with comfort, when she was alarmed by the tramp of some denizen of the forest. She was sure he was making straight for her, and without pausing to climb one of the trees around her, she started on a run for another place of refuge. Rosa was fleet of foot, and in her terror she ran further than was necessary to escape from this particular wild animal. Had she known that the brute was the same bear that had driven her out of the cavern, and that the latter place was now free, she would have returned to it, and awaited the return of her friends. But, fearing she would be followed, she continued walking until so far from her starting point that it was impossible to make her way back again until daylight.

Rosa was unaware that she had lost her reckoning, and when, after the passage of another half hour, it occurred to her to return to the vicinity of the cavern, so as to be within call when her friends should come back, she did not anticipate trouble in reaching the spot. She walked with a cautious tread, often stopping and listening for sounds of the wild beasts that she believed were all around her, until, when she believed she had gone far enough, and stopped to look for the cavern, nothing was to be seen of it. Even then she suspected she had missed the place by a narrow margin, which could be easily recovered. Confident that it would be found a few yards to the left of where she had paused, she turned her face thither, and walked twice as far as she thought necessary, only to discover herself in the depth of the forest.

"Can it be I am lost?" she asked, in dismay. "There is nothing around me, so far as I can see, that I have ever looked upon before, and I have traveled far enough to get a long way from the cavern, if I went in the wrong direction."

She did not wish to believe she had committed so serious a blunder as that. But the conviction was forcing itself upon her, nevertheless, that it was the fact.

The discovery was anything but a pleasant one, for she believed it was about the period when some of her friends would be looking for her. At the same time she was filled with a dread that her absence would be the cause of delay in carrying out the plan of entering Wilkesbarre that night. Lena-Wingo would not be able to trail her in the gloom, nor would he understand the cause that had driven her from the cavern. In short, Rosa saw in the forced action on her part the ruin of all the plans of their dusky friend, who had taken great pains to conduct her to safety behind the fortifications of the little town.

How bitterly Jo and Ned would regret her forgetfulness of the vow they had made among themselves to follow the instructions of the Mohawk, no matter what the temptation to disregard them! The poignancy of these reflections was the cause of her taking her second step in the series of unfortunate ones that now marred her experience. Had she been on a hunting excur-

sion, as was often the case, with the Mohawk, she would have been thoughtful enough to have remained where she was until morning. This would have simplified the difficulty so that a meeting with her friend would have followed. But her anxiety to undo the error committed led her to forget such manifest precautions as these, and caused her to continue the effort to retrieve the slip.

The result was inevitable. She went further and further astray, until at the moment Lena-Wingo uttered the signals intending to summon her to them, she was a third of a mile beyond the point reached by the faint whistling. As the conviction forced itself upon her that she was hopelessly lost, her distress and self-reproach gave her no rest. Yielding to a resistless desire to keep on moving she turned off along the bank of a stream, which, though of insignificant proportions, was too broad for her to cross. The wanderer had reached the point, by this time, of having given up all hope of reaching the cavern, unless she should drift back by some Providential good fortune, and she still kept forward.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ALL ALONE.

A STRANGE fatality seems to attend those who become lost in the woods, whether it be at night or in the daytime. Men who have spent years in hunting and have lived in the solitudes bid good-bye to their senses when called upon to face a trouble that has threatened them from the first. In addition to that curious tendency to move in a circle which is known to every one there is the same weakness which is supposed to belong to those who have had no experience in fighting the danger of the wilderness. Hunters have fallen down and perished within call of their own door-steps, and others have wandered for days, until overtaken by death from starvation or exposure.

Rosa Minturn had attracted the admiration of the veteran Lena-Wingo by the self-possession which she displayed in more than one situation of peril when wandering with him in the woods, but she had lost her head now, and was

acting like one who had never enjoyed the training of such a teacher as he. An hour passed after reaching the small stream, when she came to a portion where the brook—for it was nothing more—was spanned by a tree, whose roots were on the other side, while the top, having fallen, was resting on the shore upon which she stood.

"Shall I cross?" was the question which she asked herself, and debated for several minutes. "I don't know whether I am safer on one side than another; I haven't seen this stream before, and so it would seem that I ought not to go over, but stay where I am."

The inclination to cross was so great that she yielded, and, stepping upon the trunk, which was quite broad and heavy, she began walking over. The distance was so short that no difficulty attended the performance, even if the trunk had been only a fractional part as large. But she was a child of fancies then, and she was about half way over when she paused, under the belief that some one else was about to cross from the other side!

She did not turn back and flee, as would have been natural, but stopped and stared at the

dark shore, wondering whether it was friend or foe. Then the belief seized her that it was neither, but that some wild animal was crouching in the dark, waiting till she came nearer before he seized her! This was very little, if any, improvement on the presence of an Indian, but it was enough to cause the fugitive to turn on her heel and speed back to the shore she had just left with far more haste than she had shown in starting.

"That's a warning for me to stay where I am," she concluded, springing to the ground and looking affrightedly behind her to see whether the terrible beast was following her.

The probability was that no animal at all was there, and that the alarming cause was nothing more than a rustling leaf, or the slight displacement caused by her additional weight upon the trunk, but the wanderer lost no time in leaving the spot where she believed a wild beast was waiting to devour her. She had spent a long time in the woods, and the night was well past, though in her bewildered state she had, naturally enough, lost all idea of the passage of time. She had managed to drift further and further away from the cavern where her

friends at that moment were conjecturing and speculating as to what had become of her.

Rosa was not sensible of fatigue; for aside from her natural elasticity of frame, her state of mind rendered her oblivious to the weariness of the body. When she reached a point where she began to think she was beyond danger from the last wild beast that faced her, her thoughts were turned in a new direction by a light in the woods. At that moment she was quite a distance from the stream where she had received her last fright, and the light was directly before her, so that she had but to walk straight ahead to reach it.

"That may be the camp fire that Lena-Wingo has kindled to show me the way to them; and then, again, it may belong to some of the Tories or Iroquois."

At any rate, it seemed a part of wisdom for her to assure herself, and, with little hesitation, she began stealing cautiously toward the point. It was not far off, but she moved so slowly that she was a considerable time in reaching it. Before she had passed half the intervening distance, she caught sight of flitting figures moving back and forth before it.

The nearer she drew the more suspicious she was of the character of those gathered around it; and before she reached the place where she meant to make her final observations, all doubts were removed. She saw that she had ferreted out a camp of Indians. Four men were gathered about a small blaze that had been kindled against the trunk of a tree, and they were busy preparing something in the way of food.

Rosa stood for several minutes, looking at the party with strange interest. Their faces were painted as hideously as the others whom she had met during the last few days, and there were no distinctive features about them that could convince her that she had seen them before. Whether they were a part of the score or more that had been at Forty Fort, with Colonel Butler, or whether they were a portion of another band, was more than she could decide. The wanderer believed that she was not a great distance from her starting point, so it seemed likely to her that they belonged to the body-guard of Butler himself, who was somewhere in the neighborhood.

She had been so long in the woods that she began to think that dawn was not far off, in

which case it was important that she should lose no time in placing as great a distance as possible between her and her enemies. To do so it was necessary that she should pursue an opposite direction—that is, one leading away from the camp. She had gone but a short distance when she saw signs of the break of day.

"Now I will soon have Lena-Wingo on my trail," she thought, with a thrill of hope; "but I may have some others, too, and there's no saying which will get the start."

This was a contingency which was not impossible by any means, and it caused the girl no little uneasiness. At times she was on the point of trying to make her trail as distinct as she could, so as to render it easier for the Mohawk to follow, but was restrained by the dread that it might be the means of guiding some of her enemies to her. The result was that she continued at her ordinary gait, her conclusion being that one of the Indians, if he chose, could follow her footsteps, whether she tried to hide them or render them plain. She saw no signs of anything like a path, and it looked in many places as if hers was the first foot that had stirred the leaves for a long time.

Though well acquainted in a general way with the woods on both sides of the Susquehanna, for a considerable distance from her home, Rosa was unable to detect anything that could tell her where she was, or by what possible means she could hope to find her way back to the cavern from which she had strayed.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE PURSUERS.

When the morning dawned upon the lost girl, and she had considered as fairly as possible her situation, she was convinced that she ought to do one of two things: Find out by some means or other where she was, so that she could proceed in the direction of the cavern and thus simplify the work of the Mohawk and her friends, or stay where she was; for she saw that her aimless wandering through the woods was only making the task of her rescuers more difficult, without benefiting herself in the least. The probability of her coming accidentally upon her destination was too remote to be considered in the case. In spite of the fact that she had been walking for hours, she was so anxious to help in the search for herself, that she kept up the hunt for some place that would tell her where she was, and thus give a definite aim to her wanderings.

It was not long before she succeeded in reaching higher ground, with enough cleared space to offer an extended survey of the surrounding country. But her disappointment was great when, with a number of square miles spread out before her, she was unable to understand the precise part of the world into which she had drifted. A long distance to the left something gleamed in the sunlight which she supposed was the Susquehanna, although its location was altogether different from what she supposed before reaching the spot. She spent some time in studying this question, for it was an important one to settle. The conclusion that she came to at last was that it must be the river.

"It is a much greater distance than I thought possible," she reflected, "but when I walk several hours as I did, I must go more than a mile, and it looks as if I have traveled all the time in the wrong direction."

Concluding that she was gazing on the Susquehanna, it was not a difficult task to study out the course to reach the cavern. A few minutes enabled her to fix it in mind. When she left the open space that had served her as a

lookout, and started on the route she was convinced it was the right one.

"This mistake of mine has put matters back for a day—that's certain; and if the Mohawk has started after me, he will probably reach here about the same time that I get *there*, and then there will come another waiting spell. But we will have all the day to work and wait, and plenty of time to get things straight before night. If we *do* get together once more," added the girl, in a voice which showed there was still painful doubt lingering in her mind, "I am sure we'll *stay* together. We have separated for what we supposed was to be a few minutes, and it has turned out a few hours, and if I am permitted to join them once more I don't intend that a big bear shall drive me away again."

She had fixed the course she was to follow so clearly in her mind that she felt little fear of going wrong. She continued forward not too rapidly, but with an unfaltering step which showed that she knew the right route. Nevertheless, she was puzzled over the fact that she had gone only a comparatively short distance, when she found herself on the bank of a small stream, no doubt the same one where she met

the wild beast, as she believed. This looked as if something was wrong, and for the moment Rosa was disheartened.

"It seems to me that the harder I try to get right the more I go wrong. When Lena-Wingo finds me, I shall feel ashamed, for I have acted like one who was never in the woods before. Two years ago, when I was lost from him, I showed more sense than I have this time. Having once got off the track there seems no way that I can get back again. I may as well sit down and wait for him or some one to come along this route."

She moved along the bank of the little stream, which was found so narrow in many places that she was able to leap across. This she proved by making a light bound that landed her several inches beyond the flow of the water, though the soil of that particular spot was so moist that the imprint of a single delicate shoe was left to be admired by whomsoever seen. It did not occur to her that this imprint was likely to betray her to any one, and indeed she did not pause to observe that it was really made, but moved on until she had gone a few rods, when she paused near a dense growth of shrubbery,

and sat down upon a large stone. Once seated, she became aware that she was very tired.

"I may as well stay here," she mused, as she thought over the hours of wandering in the woods. "All my tramping is not going to help Lena-Wingo to find me, and he will wish that I had stopped long ago, so as to make it easier for him to come up with me. He will find his way to this spot, and all I have to do is to wait for him."

There could be no question that the fugitive was right in this conclusion, and the situation was simply reduced to the problem whether her friend or an enemy would reach the spot first. The woods as she had learned long before, were full of the Iroquois, and there was always the possibility that some of them might find her; but it was not to be supposed that any were making a systematic search for her, while it was certain that the Mohawk was, and, therefore, the probabilities, as she looked upon them, pointed to a meeting with Lena-Wingo before encountering another.

Rosa was not sleepy; she was too tired for that, as the expression goes, but her whole frame was so wearied that she felt she could sit

where she was for the whole day, if her friends were only about her. And sitting thus strange thoughts came wandering through her mind. She could feel no concern for the safety of Lena-Wingo, for he never seemed to be in danger, while she must be sensible at all times of a solicitude for her brother, whom she loved with the wealth of her sisterly affection, yet her parting with him was such that she was relieved of all alarm on his account. But not so as regarded Ned Clinton.

She recalled the words she had exchanged with him, wherein she learned of the depths of his patriotism, and of his burning desire of being of assistance to his country in her struggle for independence. She remembered the praise which her brother was always ready to utter in behalf of the young man, and she was sure that Ned deserved all that was said, and more, too. There was a fluttering belief in her own heart, and a strange thrill came with the knowledge, that Ned thought more of her than all the world besides. The maiden discovers when she is beloved, even though her admirer strives to conceal it, for with the gentle sex it is a matter of intuition. And so Rosa was able to recall not

the utterances merely, but the manner of the noble young man, which told the story more plainly than words could have done.

"Yes, he loves me," she murmured, as if she was afraid her own ears might betray her secret; "and could I be beloved by a nobler youth than he, who—"

She checked herself as if she were doing a wrong thing in thus permitting her fancy to take rein: and as if she would drive the sweet thoughts from her mind, she leaned forward, and, parting the bushes, gazed back over the last few rods she had passed. She was looking for the coming of the Mohawk, and when the undergrowth was parted in the manner mentioned, she could see very plainly the point where she had leaped across the brook. At the moment of looking, she observed two Iroquois coming up the same shore directly toward her.

A few steps brought them to the exact spot where she had landed and left the impression of her shoe. The imprint was so distinct that both the Iroquois saw it at the same moment, and stopped with an exclamation which was plainly heard by the terrified girl. The next second they moved straight toward her!

CHAPTER XX.

THE IROQUOIS AND THEIR CAPTIVE.

Poor Rosa, cowering in terror in the undergrowth, with her eyes fixed upon the two Iroquois, saw no possible escape. The Indians were walking along, their manner showing they were following the faint trail on the ground before them with all the skill which they possessed. One walked slowly forward, with his eyes fixed upon the ground, never once raising them, but advancing inch by inch, as the fire creeps along the fuse. While he confined himself strictly to this duty, his companion attended as closely to his part of the work. This consisted of glancing in every direction, and scrutinizing every point in turn, excepting that which was under the gaze of his brother warrior. He wished to make sure they did not drift into any ambush while following the trail of a single fugitive. Furthermore, he was using his brains in speculating as to the

meaning of this single trail which they had chanced upon.

The first glimpse showed that it had been made by some woman, for no man was favored with a foot which could have left such a beauteous impression as that. Thus far, too, the signs indicated that she was alone, though they were suspicious that some of her friends were within call. It was that phase of the question which they were anxious to settle before getting themselves into difficulty. The second Iroquois, who was glancing here, there, and everywhere, was not long in detecting the dense mass of undergrowth, and in noting that the footprints led toward it. An exclamation caused his companion to stop, and both looked straight at the hiding-place of Rosa, who, in turn, was peeping furtively at them from between the leaves, shrinking back as far as she could, through fear that they would detect her in the act.

At that moment they were hardly a hundred feet distant, and she could not see the remotest chance of escape. There was no way by which she could leave her hiding-place without being seen. Had she discovered them when at

a greater distance, she might have eluded them for awhile, but the location of the bushes, of which she had availed herself rendered it impossible for her to do so now. All, then, that she could do was to watch and hope that they would turn aside and pass her by. It was idle to expect such a thing, for the evidences of her whereabouts were too distinct to be mistaken.

The Iroquois remained talking a minute or two, during which time they scarcely removed their eyes from the clump of undergrowth. Both pointed in that direction several times, so there could be no doubt of the subject of the discussion. It is probable that the footprints which arrested their attention told them that they were in the vicinity of the hiding-place of a number of fugitive patriots, and that a chance was before them for a massacre of their own.

The test which the leading Iroquois resorted to was a startling one to Rosa Minturn. Without any warning, he raised his gun, and pointing it at the bushes where she was hidden, pulled the trigger. The wonder was that she was not killed, for she was not given time to attempt to evade the bullet. As it was, it clipped the

leaves close to her cheek, spending itself in the wood behind her.

The precise meaning of the challenge passed the comprehension of Rosa Minturn, but she hoped it would be accepted by the Iroquois as proof that no one was concealed in the undergrowth toward which the trail led. The warriors could not be guilty of such an oversight, however. After the marksman had reloaded his piece, the two resumed their maneuvering, though in a way that deceived the girl for a time into the belief that they had abandoned the pursuit, and she was in no danger of further molestation from them. The redskin who had fired the shot which missed Rosa by such a narrow chance, suddenly turned, leaped across the stream, and vanished in the wood on the other side. The second Iroquois took an opposite course, passing from sight immediately after.

"That looks as if they had made up their minds that no person is left alive in this place, and they have gone off on other business. If they will stay a while, they will give Lena-Wingo time to come up and meet me."

The fact that the redskins acted so strangely

prevented Rosa from feeling sure that all danger had passed.

"They would n't have separated and gone on in different directions if they were through with me. They came together, and they would have left together, if all is right, which I fear is not the case."

That being her conclusion, it struck her that she ought not to stay where she was and allow them to come down and take her captive whenever ready to do so. Once again she parted the bushes in front, this time doing it so as to gain a view of the wood in every direction, her purpose being to satisfy herself, if she could, that she was free to make a change of situation. The survey was satisfactory, and, sensible of the value of time, she cautiously withdrew from the undergrowth which had served as a temporary screen, and began a stealthy movement leading opposite to that which she was following at the time she sought the refuge. In other words, she continued the course that was interrupted by her pause for rest.

In making this flight, she did her utmost to hide her trail from the Iroquois, provided they returned to the spot and renewed the search for her.

For one who moved as lightly as she it would seem that this was not difficult, and when she occasionally glanced back to test the success of the essay, she was hopeful she was succeeding so well that the Indians would be baffled if they attempted to track her from her place of concealment. Even though she took such extraordinary pains to hide her footsteps, it is questionable whether she would have succeeded altogether; for when an Indian accustomed to trailing a foe sets about dogging him, it is almost as hard to throw him off as it is to baffle a bloodhound.

It is probable that the most that Rosa could have done, under favorable circumstances, would have been to compel her enemies to make such diligent search that the capture would have been delayed long enough to allow the Mohawk to take a hand in the proceedings. But the situation was against the fair fugitive from the start. The Iroquois knew that some one was within the undergrowth, and they did not mean to give whomsoever it might be a chance to elude them. Though they were out of sight themselves, they were near at hand, and they kept the hiding-place under close scrutiny, so

that when Rosa stole forth, believing she had a chance to get away, both saw her. It only remained to learn whether she left any behind her, and that was a brief and easy task. That accomplished they followed after the girl. Just as she was beginning to breathe freely, she was terrified to observe one of the warriors directly before her. With a gasp of fear she turned to flee when she found herself face to face with the second Iroquois. She was a captive at last.

CHAPTER XXI.

GOING TOWARD CAMP.

When the girl saw she was doomed to fall into the hands of the two Indians, she accepted her fate with a dignity and self-possession which would have failed many older persons under similar circumstances. She did not scream or faint, or make any useless struggles, when it was evident that nothing was to be gained by that course. She stood still, and simply looked at the redmen as they came to her with that cat-like tread which they would have used had they been stealing upon a foe whom they held in mortal fear.

The girl hardly supposed they would inflict any violence or injury, for she believed them to be a part of the company brought over by Colonel Butler, and that they had been searching the woods for hours in quest of her and her companions. If they gained the chance she would have thought it probable they would shoot Ned or Jo or Lena-Wingo; but they were

instructed, as she well knew, to bring her in as prisoner.

One of them reached forward and seized her arm with no very gentle grip, while he leaned his head over and glared in her face with such a ferocious expression that she drew back, as she would have done from the presence of a wild beast. At this the other warrior said something which resulted in the savage releasing his hold. Rosa accepted this as proof that the two were searching the forest for no other purpose than to find and take her to Colonel Butler. Such being the case, the Tory leader would look with disfavor upon any rudeness on the part of those entrusted with bringing her in.

"What doing here?" asked the Iroquois, who had given her arm a pinch, speaking in as intelligible English as Lena-Wingo was in the habit of employing.

"I was trying to get away from you," was the truthful answer of Rosa.

"Where other pale faces?" continued the savage.

"They are not here, but I hope they are close by," was the response of the captive, who therein

came as near a falsehood as her conscience would permit.

"How close by?" continued the redskin, looking about him, as if he expected the appearance of his foes.

"I was expecting Lena-Wingo, the Mohawk, when you came; I do not understand why he is so long coming."

And it was Rosa's turn to peer around, as if she was sure the dusky scout was near. The mention of that dreaded name caused a sensation on the part of the two Iroquois. They looked at each other, muttering something in their own tongue, and then glanced at different points of the compass, as if they were not in the most pleasant situation of their lives.

It was plain that had the Mohawk come down upon them at that juncture, they would have taken to their heels, and yielded up their prisoner without a struggle. Rosa was not clear in her own mind whether it was the safe thing to appeal to this means or not. If the captors believed they were in peril from the dreaded Mohawk, they might tomahawk her and get away as fast as they knew how. But it looked as if there was no danger of that, for,

judging from their manner, they were actually discussing the question whether it was not the best thing for them to abandon her and return to the main body.

Whatever their decision, it must have been manifest that it was not a prudent thing for them to stay where they were, when the captive was looking for the coming of Lena-Wingo every moment. The consultation between the couple lasted but a moment or two, when they decided what should be done.

"Come 'long!" said the one who had acted as spokesman thus far—"come 'long—we go 'way from here."

This was bad news to Rosa, who supposed their intention was to take her to the camp where Colonel Butler was awaiting them.

"Where can Lena-Wingo be all this time?" she groaned in spirit, as she turned to obey the command of the savage. "He is so fleet of foot that he ought to have found me long ago; if he should come now, how quickly these two would flee and leave me alone! But, alas! he will be too late!"

And she looked again in the direction whence she believed he would appear—if he should

appear at all! But there were no signs of the one whom she now desired to see above all others. On that beautiful summer morning the woods were as still as if untrodden by the foot of man or animal. Nowhere was there to be seen that stealthy parting of the bushes, and the thrusting forward of the painted visage, by which the Mohawk generally announced his coming to his friends.

The captors noted the look of the captive, and, as may be supposed, it served to make them the more anxious to leave the spot as soon as possible. They knew of the honor and the reward awaiting those who should take to Colonel Butler the maiden upon whom he had set his heart, and they were as desirous as two warriors of their race could be to succeed. They were ready to run great risk, but were not quite willing to engage in a hand-to-hand struggle with the great Mohawk scout with the certainty of the result.

"Walk fast!" said one of the captors, as Rosa started off at a deliberate pace—"walk fast—we in hurry."

She was anxious to lose as much time as possible, for she had everything to gain by

doing so, while the redskins had everything to lose. So long as she could delay the passage to the camp, so much greater would be the likelihood of the Mohawk coming up and interfering before the destination was reached. In the latter contingency, the difficulty of her rescue by Lena-Wingo would be increased tenfold. Indeed, she feared that it would be rendered impossible, since with the knowledge which the Tories and Iroquois possessed of the skill and prowess of the Mohawk, they would take every precaution against a rescue by him of the maiden for whom all these labors were undertaken, and for whose sake the pursuers had encountered every degree of peril, and in some cases death itself.

Rosa, therefore, made a feint of obeying the rude command of her captor. But she had taken only a step or two when she purposely dropped back into a slower rate than before.

CHAPTER XXII.

SAVAGES.

THE Iroquois did not show a willingness to permit their captive to do as she wished in this respect.

"Go fast!" commanded the warrior, in a voice so loud and angry that she started and hastened to obey.

She feared it was dangerous to presume on the forbearance of her captors; but the temptation to delay was so strong, where there was so much at stake, that she showed slight rebellion. One of the savages was in advance and the other one walked behind her. She was thus guarded in as effectual a manner as possible. Every few steps she looked furtively around, hoping against hope for the appearance of her Mohawk friend. Seeing him not, she began lagging again, her purpose being to make the savages think she was too weary to move at a faster rate.

"Walk faster, or I kill!"

The command, coming in the gruffest of voices from the one behind her, was enough to startle her to whom it was addressed; but the order was accompanied by a blow upon the delicate shoulder that almost struck the girl to the earth! Though the indignity was delivered with the open hand, its cruel force sent a thrill of pain throughout her whole system—the shock intensified by the reflection that she had been subjected to the indignity for the first time in her life. It filled her with such horror and dread that all disposition to trespass on the indulgence of the Iroquois departed. She saw in them only a couple of miscreants, who would be glad of an excuse to murder her, just as two of their race had done in the case of the beautiful Miss MacCrea, the year before.

She staggered for a moment under the blow, but by a strong effort of the will saved herself from falling. At the same time something of her old pride came to her, and she resolved that they should witness no sign of suffering and dismay on her part, even though they turned and buried their tomahawks in her brain. The blow must have been heard by the Indian in advance, but he showed his indifference by

never stopping or looking behind him! With the consciousness of her peril from these savages, came a dull despair which made further effort on her part distasteful. It was plain she could do nothing for herself, and only trust to Heaven, which had never deserted her in her extremity.

The captors followed the course of the brook which was the scene of her capture until several hundred yards from their starting point. Nothing as yet met the eye of the girl by which she could gain an idea of the particular part of the forest in which they were. A little distance further, however, when they left the stream, they passed a large oak, that had been shivered some time before by a bolt of lightning.

The captive recognized the spot as having been used as a camp during the preceding summer, when she was on one of her hunting excursions with Lena-Wingo. As the Iroquois passed within a few feet of it, she identified it fully. The surprise which it occasioned caused her to forget for the time the indignity at the hands of the brutal captors. The sight of the riven oak proved she was at that moment all of two miles from the cavern and there was no telling

how much further she had wandered during the night. It became plain to her why the Mohawk was nowhere to be seen, even after the sun was well up in the sky. At the least, he was obliged to trail her for three or four miles—her wanderings being such that the only way for him to find her was by using her footprints as his guide.

In following a person or party who are making for some definite point, it not infrequently happens that the pursuer is able to cross the trail from place to place, when the course is circuitous, and thus gain a great deal in time and distance. In the present instance nothing of the kind was possible, for the reason that when the lost one knew not where she was going herself, it was out of the question for her follower to guess at what point she was likely to bring up. This was the cause of the delay in Lena-Wingo showing himself, even when putting forth all his skill.

No halt was made at the tree mentioned, though a hesitation on the part of her captors led Rosa to hope they would make a halt. But for the blow received from the Iroquois, she would have resorted to more than one artifice

to delay the journey toward the Tory camp, and there is little doubt that she would have accomplished something; but, as we have already shown, she had given over all such strategy to help herself. She was sure that the Indians were going toward the river, which, of course, must be in the direction of the camp where Colonel Butler was awaiting her coming.

At no great distance from the oak mentioned, the little party halted near a spring which bubbled from beneath a black rock. This, too, was a well remembered landmark, and Rosa recalled the time when she had sat there for more than an hour, listening to Lena-Wingo, while he told, in his broken way, how he had slain a great bear that attacked him, when only a small boy, near the lodge of his father. She remembered, too, that on the same occasion she placed a small tin-cup beneath the root of a tree near by, so that it would be available whenever they passed that way again.

The present day was warm and sultry, and she felt the need of a drink, as doubtless did the Iroquois. Before the latter could kneel down to help themselves, one after another, she ran to the tree and brought out the little cup. The

savages looked wonderingly to see what she was doing, and showed surprise when she held the utensil in her hand. It seemed to her that she might do something to win the good-will of the captors, and she did a graceful thing.

Stooping down, she filled the cup with cold water, and stepping to the Indian who had struck her the cruel blow, offered it to him. The savage—as he was in every sense—took the cup from her, and then deliberately threw it, with the contents, in her face! At this, he and his companion broke into a loud laugh, as though it was the most humorous thing they had ever known.

Poor Rosa did not lose her dignity, even under so trying an ordeal. She said never a word, and though her face flushed with anger, yet she held her peace. She drew her handkerchief from her dress, and quietly wiped the water away as it trickled down her countenance. Then she stooped down, picked up the cup, filled it again from the spring, and quenched her own thirst.

The Indians grinned for several minutes, and then they too satisfied their thirst by applying their mouths to the fluid, just as swine do when

they drink. Rosa, after she was through with the cup, returned it to its place beneath the root, as though nothing had happened.

"Come—walk fast," said the captor who had treated her so brutally from the first.

No reply was given to the savage, except to imply by her action that she was ready to do their bidding. The journey was resumed and continued as before, the captive maintaining a pace that secured her against all danger of any more rudeness from the warriors.

The day was advancing and the girl was sure that they were approaching the camp which she dreaded above everything else, when all at once the captors halted as if by common impulse. They had heard a sharp whistle from the woods at their left. Rosa caught the same sound, and a thrill of hope went through her at the thought that the Mohawk had arrived upon the scene and short, sharp and decisive work was at hand. A few seconds more would make known the truth.

CHAPTER XXIII.

IS HE A FRIEND?

It was hard to tell from the actions of the Iroquois whether they were alarmed at the signal which thus fell upon their ears. Rosa thought they were scared, because they made no answer to it, but instantly stopped and began talking with each other in low voices. She tried to hide her own excitement, but it was difficult to do so, when roused from such a depth of despair to such a height of hope.

She recognized the point from which the signal came, and she turned her eyes in that direction with a longing, yearning expression hard to imagine.

Before the strange Indians came in sight, they repeated the call, and with no little dismay Rosa heard her captives reply to it. This did not look as if they were enemies, though it will be understood by the reader who recalls a similar maneuver which the Mohawk executed at the time he secured the release of Ned Clinton, that

the grounds on which the captive based her fears might be causeless. It was well, perhaps, that such was the case, for it prepared her, in a measure, for the bitter disappointment which almost immediately succeeded.

She was gazing at the point where the others were expected, when they presented themselves. It was as she dreaded. They were Iroquois, and they numbered two—the same as those who held her in custody. They were like the score, more or less, that were still ranging the woods in quest of the fugitives. Searching here and there, without any marked success, they now and then signaled to their friends to learn how they were making out. The last time they indulged in the call, they happened to be close enough to attract the notice of the couple who were the custodians of the all important captive.

As the strangers united with the fortunate brace of wretches, they showed no little pleasure in finding that their brother warriors had secured the prize. They looked at her with great curiosity, as if she were some strange animal, the like of which they had never seen before. One of the warriors was a young man, or "buck," and his actions showed that he was

struck with admiration of the beauty of the captive. Not being polite enough to be circumspect in his sentiments, he succeeded in making himself obnoxious in the highest degree to the object of his attention.

Walking directly up in front of her, he folded his arms and stared into the face of the blushing girl. His gaze was so fixed and penetrating that it was more than Rosa could stand, and she turned her back upon him. The Indian deliberately walked around so as to face her again and continued his attention.

She was afraid to anger him, as she could not forget the lesson given by one of the other warriors, and yet her modesty led her to turn her back once more. The savage angrily caught hold of her arm, uttering an exclamation in his own tongue. The poor captive was at a loss what to do, for the other warriors appeared to enjoy her torture. Her embarrassment was painful, but, true to the innate modesty of her nature, she turned again when she saw the action of her persecutor, at the same time freeing her arm from his grasp.

Her admirer probably would have used greater violence at being baffled in this manner, and

Rosa covered her face with her hands, determined that he should not be gratified in his brutal attention. At the same moment her feelings obtained the mastery and she broke into a fit of sobbing.

Her persecutor would have been still more rude, but an interference came from a quarter where it was least expected. The other Indian who had just joined the party stepped forward at this juncture, and, catching the arm of the young brute in his own powerful grip, with one wrench threw him a dozen feet away.

Young blood is hot, and not the less so in a young Indian. The discomfited warrior sprang up from the ground, and, drawing his knife, replied to the angry exclamation of the older one with one still more wrathful. At the same time he made a rush upon the Iroquois who had dared to insult him in that manner. But the fool had undertaken a task which would have been a hard one for Lena-Wingo himself. Among the Six Nations there was none who was capable of striking to the earth this particular warrior.

As the assailant charged upon him, the others fell back so as to clear the way, for they saw

THE INFURIATED BUCK * * * GRASPED THE HAFT OF HIS TOMAHAWK.—Page 165.

that neither was in a mood for interference, no matter from what quarter. The young brave made a vicious pass with his knife, which was avoided with ease by the older one, who, besides escaping harm, gained the chance to bury his own weapon to the hilt in the breast of his audacious assailant. But, instead of doing so, he struck such a blow that he knocked the knife from his hand, and sent it spinning twenty feet away. This left the latter without any weapon except his tomahawk, he having set down his rifle at the time he advanced upon Rosa Minturn.

Instead of appreciating the mercy shown him by his master, the infuriated buck lost command of himself, and grasped the haft of his tomahawk. At this instant Rosa learned that something unusual was going on. She subdued her emotion enough to look up and witness the strange proceedings. She was just in time to see her persecutor leap back several feet so as to give him free swing as he hurled his weapon.

While he was thus engaged the elder one stood as immobile as a tree, one hand resting on the knife in his girdle, and the other on the tomahawk, although he did not draw either.

Nothing could restrain the furious enemy, who circled his keen instrument aloft for an instant. Then with one quick sweep, he sent it whirling from his hand straight at the brain of the other.

The latter dropped his head with the celerity of lightning itself and the whizzing tomahawk sped harmlessly by and buried itself in the ground beyond. Before the thrower could comprehend that he had missed his aim, the Indian made one leap that placed him directly before him. Then, ere he could retreat, he dealt him a blow with his naked fist that stretched him as one dead upon the ground. But he was not killed, and was sure to revive in the course of a few minutes, when it might be reasonably supposed that he would conclude he had undertaken rather too large a contract to fulfill.

His conquerer turned calmly away from his fallen foe and began talking to the others as though nothing unusual had taken place. He probably explained to them that Colonel Butler would be much displeased if he should hear from the lips of the captive that she had been ill-used by any of the warriors. He had interfered more for the sake of the brave himself, than for the helpless captive. The action of

this savage in stepping in at the critical moment naturally drew the attention of Rosa Minturn to him.

The moment she looked fairly at him, she was certain that somewhere, and at some time before the present, she had seen him, or some one who resembled him so closely that the difference could not be distinguished. She set herself to work to recall the occasion, but it proved a more difficult task than she imagined. During the last few days she had been called upon to confront a great many more Indians than was pleasant, and more than she hoped ever to see again. She concluded that he must have been one of them, although it was a puzzle why his features and general appearance should wear so familiar an appearance.

At last the truth flashed upon her. He was the same warrior who had discovered her and Lena-Wingo when they were hiding near Forty Fort, and had passed them as though he saw them not!

CHAPTER XXIV.

MORE AN ENEMY THAN A FRIEND.

This was another illustration of the result that frequently flows from an act of disinterested friendship. At sometime or other Lena-Wingo had done some kindness for the Iroquois warrior. When the former was stealing from the vicinity of Forty Fort with Rosa Minturn, and when his pursuers crowded around so closely that he was forced to seek concealment with her in the wood, they were discovered in their hiding-place by this Indian, who was one of those hunting for the fugitives. It is not necessary to tell again how skillfully he not only drew away from the spot, but also drew others who were working toward the same hiding-place, thus saving the couple when there was scarcely any hope for them.

A short time afterward, this warrior, while approaching Ned Clinton, was seized by the

Mohawk, who detected his identity just in time to spare him. And now when the Iroquois moved away from that neighborhood, and continued his search for the girl with as much persistence as any of his tribe, he had interfered to prevent the captive being insulted by one of his own race.

It is a curious characteristic of the brave of whom we are speaking, that what he did was through no pity for the maiden, but he knew the girl was a favorite of Lena-Wingo, who would resent any rudeness to her, no matter from what quarter it came. And that was the sole reason why he interfered in the manner described. But for the Mohawk he would have stood calmly by and seen her persecuted even unto death itself!

After such a decided favor, Rosa could not but look upon the elder Indian with gratitude. She was on the point of going up to him and telling as best she could how thankful she was, when a diversion occurred, caused by the recovery of the young warrior who had received a drubbing at the hands of the elder. He recalled his senses almost as quickly as he had lost them, and rose to his feet like one just aroused from

slumber. His conquerer looked keenly at him, as if to read his intentions, but one glance was enough. All the "fight" was knocked out of the ambitious fledgling and he must have concluded that the next time he tried his hand it would be upon another.

After bestowing the single glance, the elder turned his side toward the young brave, and continued talking as before. The vanquished buck walked to the bushes where his knife landed, after being knocked from his grasp, and, picking it up, shoved it back in place without a word. Then he did the same with his tomahawk.

And then he stood motionless and dumb, ready for any service that might be required of him, provided it was not a repetition of the task he had just signally failed in performing. Under the war-paint covering his face were the signs of the sledge-hammer-like blow he had received from the hands of his master.

When the recipient of the compliment looked upon her, it may be doubted whether he admired her as fully as before. There was something almost laughable in the looks which the two—the girl and her former admirer—gave each

other. He doubtless considered her the author of his humiliation, and his admiration was turned to the gall of bitterness and hatred. She abhorred him, and was glad he had received the punishment he earned. But it was a dangerous thing to indulge in her feeling of triumph, and through fear of inciting him to some sudden outbreak of anger, she withdrew her gaze and looked toward him who had befriended her for the sake of Lena-Wingo, the Mohawk.

There was something going on which was of deep interest to the four Indians; for even the sullen buck who had been knocked senseless to the earth listened but a moment to the words uttered by the other three, when he drew near and took a prominent part in what was said. Rosa would have given much could she have understood what was uttered, for she knew it concerned her; but as everything was spoken in the Indian tongue, she comprehended not a word.

The danger was that the captive was likely to misunderstand the one thing the elder warrior had done in her service. Indeed it was hardly possible for her to look upon it in any other light than an act of friendship, dictated

by a sense of pity for her distress at the hands of an unfeeling villain.

"He is the master of them all," she said to herself, "and if he wants me to go free, why don't he insist upon it? Nobody would dare say him nay. If I were in the place of that one he struck down I wouldn't have anything to say in *this* case."

At any rate, whatever it was about, it was certainly bringing more delay, which was a godsend, when there was every reason to believe the Mohawk was pressing forward upon the trail. She observed that the elder Indian who occupied the leading part in her thoughts and hopes was looked upon by the others as somewhat of a commander, and his decision was accepted in the controversy which boiled up for awhile. That being evident to a mere looker-on like her, it served to increase her hope that some good to her was likely to flow therefrom.

Her heart fluttered with a still deeper hope, when the warrior, turning his broad back upon the rest, walked to where she stood, as if with the purpose of saying something. She thought it wise to anticipate him.

"Thank you, thank you—you are my good friend!"

To her dismay he took no notice of her, but with a frowning, forbidding look he said:

"Come—go—come—go!"

It was plain that his knowledge of the English tongue was more limited than that of the buck who had played the part of spokesman up to this time. Her appearance must have shown she was not sure of his precise meaning, for the savage referred to came forward at this juncture and joined them.

"He say you must go with us—walk fast—must not go slow—he get mad—kill you."

This was dashing cold water upon her hopes, and she stood like one dazed by the unexpected words. It was strange to her that pains should be taken to repeat this command, which she had been acting upon from the first. She looked at the one who had befriended her, but there was no hope in his face. She bowed her head and said:

"I will go with you."

"Go on—don't walk slow!"

At the same time the warrior pointed to the right, intimating the course she was to take,

and she obeyed as promptly as if she heard a command from her own father. And still no sign of Lena-Wingo, when she once more looked wearily and despairingly around in the wood. Within the next few seconds the party were threading their way through the forest, the captive surrounded by her unfeeling captors. And only a few more minutes and a few more rods and the encampment was reached, where Colonel Butler and the majority of the Iroquois were awaiting her arrival!

CHAPTER XXV.

THE HOSTILE CAMP.

THE camp to which Rosa Minturn was conducted as a captive was the one where Ned Clinton had been held as a prisoner, condemned to death, and from which he had made the escape already described. It was a strange coincidence that at the moment the four Indians arrived with their captive Colonel Butler was sitting on the same fallen tree where he was when we last saw him, and he was smoking the same pipe. He sat with his back toward the arrivals, and did not look up for several minutes after they entered the camp.

The Iroquois were coming and going so continually that he supposed these to be some of them, without any tidings worth the trouble of turning about and shifting his seat. The truth of the matter was, the Tory leader had nearly reached the conclusion that the time had come for him to recross the Susquehanna and abandon this enterprise. It angered him to do so, but there were considerations compelling his notice

which forbade him longer to indulge in this escapade which was imperiling the safety of his whole force. He had been several days in the Wyoming valley, and the news of the defeat and massacre had traveled a long distance by that time. His cousin, Colonel Zebulon Butler, succeeded in making his escape on the day of the battle. There was little doubt in the mind of the Tory that he had carried the news to leading American officers, many of whom had friends and relatives in the valley, and nothing was more probable, as he viewed it, than that troops would be in the neighborhood within a short time. It would be a most unfortunate situation for the British and Tories, if caught with their leader on the other side the river, engaged in an attempt to capture a young lady who was fleeing to Wilkesbarre for protection.

As the colonel reflected he decided that no matter how grievously his feelings were wounded, he must return to Forty Fort that very day. He had a haunting fear that he had staid away too long already, and serious complications were arising among the forces he left across the river. Indians had been passing back and forth and the last tidings were that

everything was quiet, with no signs of the approach of the enemy from any quarter. But the officer's experience told him the imprudence of remaining where he was. Much as he hated to give up the charming little patriot, he bowed to the necessity, and the word had been given to make ready to return to the other side of the stream, not on that day merely, but on that forenoon, the half of which was now gone. Thus it will be seen that the capture of Rosa Minturn was at the very nick of time for the enemy. Had she been able to keep out of the way of the Indians for a little while longer, all danger would have been gone.

The savages were on their return to camp, in obedience to the order given them in the morning when they went forth. They had been coming in for an hour, and Colonel Butler, when he heard the slight confusion of their arrival, took it to be the same as attended the many others that morning. But the continuance of the bustle and one or two exclamations fell upon his ear, causing him to take the pipe from his mouth and look up. Could it be possible? Ay. There was the very one for whose posses-

sion he had risked so much, standing before him.

The colonel stared a minute or so like one who was unable to understand what he saw. Then realizing the amazing good fortune which had attended his efforts, and understanding the requirements of the occasion, he threw his pipe aside, rose from the log, and walked to where she stood awaiting her fate.

"Good-morning, Miss Minturn," he said, with the politeness of a cavalier; "I am glad to see you again, after your abrupt departure from your home. I hardly expected you would go without so much as saying good-bye to me."

He paused as if for an answer, but she choose to hold her peace. She was the picture of meekness and helplessness. When she first entered camp, her arrival created a considerable stir, and there was a general scrutiny of her by the Indians, all of whom were able to appreciate the extreme beauty of the captive. This scrutiny continued for a few minutes after they saw the colonel walk forward and address her. By that time, however, it was apparent to all that their attentions were not agreeable to the leader, and they turned to something else.

There were a few preparations to make before they could start for the other bank, and some needed their breakfast before going.

Thus it was that all managed to find something to engage their attention, so that Colonel Butler was left free and undisturbed to pay his respects to the lady who stood before him. Waiting a moment for her to answer, and seeing she had no intention of doing so, he added:

"You have had a long walk; you must be tired."

"So I am," she said, concluding she could gain nothing by sullen silence.

"I am sorry to hear it, and more sorry that I cannot offer you better comforts, but here is a tree which I find much better than standing on my feet all the time. Will you accept it?"

And he bowed and extended his hand toward the prostrate trunk, with the smirk and grin of a gallant. Rosa was fatigued, and hardly able to keep her feet any longer. With an attempt to hide her weariness, she walked toward the fallen tree and sat down.

"Will you allow me to share it?" And with a greater smirk and grin than ever, he sat

down within a foot or so of where she was, glancing at her as he did so, as if unwilling to take such a liberty without her permission.

She did not deign to notice him, but as she failed to forbid him, he accepted silence as assent, and sank down with as much hesitation as if he feared he was committing a crime.

"Perhaps you have not breakfasted?" he continued, in the same insinuating manner.

Never did Rosa regret anything more than that she had fasted so long. But she was in great need of food, her long wanderings through the night having given her an appetite that rose superior to the depression caused by her captivity. When she was striving to keep this longing for food in subjection, the odor of the broiling meat reached her, and she was conquered.

"I have had nothing to eat since yesterday, and if you can afford me some food I shall be grateful."

The colonel sprang up as suddenly as if a bee had stung him, and dashing to where the meat was cooking, lost no time in selecting the best portion. This was placed upon some broad leaves which he had learned to use for such pur-

poses, and then carried to where Rosa was sitting. He placed it on the log beside her, and handed a hunting-knife to her, repeatedly apologizing for the meagre conveniences at his disposal when ladies honored him with a visit.

"But you are the daughter of a settler, and have learned some of the privations that people in this part of the world are subject to; you will therefore excuse us."

Rosa nodded her head, and gave attention to the meal before her, considering the gesture sufficient acknowledgment of the apology.

CHAPTER XXVI.

FEMININE DIPLOMACY.

In spite of the disheartening situation in which Rosa found herself, she managed to make a most substantial meal. She had recovered from the first depressing shock of her capture, and when she finished her meal, she was more herself than at any time since becoming lost in the woods. She was able to look upon her situation without the bewilderment and daze that had obscured her faculties for hours before while wandering through the forest.

While engaged with her repast, her faculties were busy, and she tried to fix upon some scheme by which she could help the Mohawk in his effort to rescue her. She knew Lena-Wingo would do everything in his power to extricate her from her predicament. He had failed to appear for the reason that he was unable to trail her rapidly enough. But he would be there within an hour or two at the most, and the question, therefore, was as to how she

could act in concert with him. It was plain that the best thing she could do would be to delay the return across the Susquehanna as long as possible, for so long as they remained on this side of the river, so long would the Mohawk be at liberty to exercise his peculiar prowess and skill.

The Indians and Tories were scattered on every side the fort, and it would be almost impossible for the Mohawk, with all his wonderful strategy, to turn in any direction with his charge without incurring the capture of both. If by any means she could keep Colonel Butler and his allies on the shore until night, she was confident that the Mohawk would retake her in spite of all they could do to prevent. This delay was hardly to be expected, however, since the Tory would be sure to suspect her motive, and would be as anxious to leave as she was to remain.

The captive took that view of it, and was wise enough to conclude there was little to hope for in that direction. As Lena-Wingo must be the chief actor in all the attempts looking to her rescue, the utmost she could do was to help him by the plan mentioned—that of delay-

ing the return home. She was conscious, too, of the pride which the Mohawk felt in the success of his plan.

He had declared that Rosa should be delivered within Wilkesbarre in spite of all Colonel Butler and the Iroquois could do to prevent it. The Mohawk would risk his life a hundred times to carry out this boast, aside from his affection for the girl herself. By the time, therefore, the meal was disposed of, Rosa had decided what she should do.

With an affectation of gallantry, which would have been graceful if genuine, Colonel Butler directed his attention elsewhere while his guest was engaged with her food. When she had finished, he politely inquired whether she would not be persuaded to accept more, but she declined. Instead of reproaching the officer for his persistent persecution of her, she concluded to use the power she undoubtedly possessed over him by avoiding so long as possible any reference that could stir his anger. She knew that he was fully resolved on taking her away from the valley with him, a contingency which she viewed with a shudder. With this knowledge she was able to dissemble her dislike of the

man before her, and to meet his efforts to conciliate her in something of the same spirit.

"How is it that you come to the camp alone?" asked the colonel, who had received no account of the manner in which she had been taken prisoner.

"I became lost from the others last night, and while hunting my way back, was found by the Indians who brought me to you."

"And the Mohawk and the two young men were not with you at the time?"

"Had they been, Colonel Butler, I should not have been here," she replied, with a politeness which brought a flush to his face.

"Perhaps not," he answered. "But we will not dispute that point, as neither of us can be certain of how it would have gone, when no such meeting took place."

The Tory looked around, and noted that the Indians were losing no time in their preparations to leave. Then he calmly relit his pipe, as if with an instinctive warning that he would need its soothing influence in the stormy interview that was impending.

"Is your brother well?" he asked, the next minute.

"He was when I last saw him."

"When was that?"

"Last night."

"And his friend—young Clinton, I believe he is called—I hope he is also well."

"I have the same answer to make as before."

"Then you are not aware that he has met with quite an adventure?"

"No. What was it?"

This was asked with such a sudden flash of interest, that the colonel grasped the truth at once. He showed no evidence of the storm of jealously that was in his breast, and the chagrin over the reflection that this young and favored man, after being completely in his power, was free again.

"You seem interested in him," he remarked, with a sneer which he could not wholly conceal.

The certainty of his meaning caused the face of the maiden to flush crimson. But she parried it as best she could.

"He has been a friend since childhood, and why should I not be interested in him?"

"I look upon him as only a boy, though I

have no doubt he fills a large place in your eyes."

"What was the adventure of which you spoke?"

"He was a prisoner of ours last night."

"Is it possible?" she exclaimed, starting at this confirmation of the fears that had made her urge her brother to go in search of him, and which had clung to her ever since.

"Yes. He was a prisoner," added the Tory, "and the Indians were determined to burn him at the stake."

"Oh! Can it be?" she gasped.

"But he was not burned," the colonel hastened to add.

"Thank Heaven!" she murmured, when she caught the last declaration. "I would have died had he not escaped."

"But he did not escape."

She stared as if she did not understand him.

"I mean to say he has suffered no injury, but he did not get away of his own accord."

"I am inexpressibly relieved to hear you say that. If Heaven delivered him, I care not what the means was so long as it was effective."

"He begged hard, and cried like a child. But the Iroquois were so furious over the treatment they had received from the Mohawk that they were determined he should die, and it looked bad for him, I can tell you, for a while. And your lover would have perished if I had not taken pity on him and stopped the sport of the Indians."

CHAPTER XXVII.

DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND.

Rosa suspected that Colonel Butler was telling her something more or less than the truth, though she credited his declaration that Ned Clinton had been a prisoner in the hands of the Iroquois—mainly because she was so strongly impressed with that dread on the previous night. She believed he was free again, and that served to lift a great burden from her heart.

"I am thankful for your kindness in behalf of any unfortunate prisoner, no matter whether a friend of mine or not, and the more so when he is a friend."

"I had no intention of harming him, but even if I had I would not have been able to stand his begging to be let off. It was enough to melt the heart of a stone."

"No one can help being frightened when he believes he is soon to be burned to death. I would have done the same myself, and you likewise."

"No, I would n't," hastily answered the colonel. "No brave man will cringe and whimper when he can't help himself."

"You said a minute ago that you looked upon him as a boy."

"What of that? He is big and old enough to know better than that, that is, if he has any courage, which I don't believe."

"I know him to be brave and daring."

Rosa did not believe what had been said about Ned's cringing before the prospect of a cruel death. She knew the young scout too well for that, and she knew, too, that the Tory was trying to belittle him in her eyes. It was a subterfuge on his part, so plainly prompted by jealousy that she understood it from the first. But, although she had fixed upon a course of conciliation toward the Tory, with the hope of gaining an influence over him, yet she could not listen to his denunciation of one who was in every way his superior. Her defense of the young patriot was the most exasperating thing she could do. Colonel Butler saw only another confirmation of her love for him.

He tried to keep down his rising choler, and

answered her in a way intended to be as cutting as her own.

"That is another point upon which we cannot agree. If you consider it the proper thing for a brave man to do when in danger—that is, to cry like a child, you are welcome to the opinion."

"But my thankfulness is the same for your interference in his behalf, whether as you view it he was entitled to it or not. I am sure, too, that he is as grateful as I, but are you sure that Lena-Wingo had nothing to do with securing his liberty?"

This was a chance question, as Rosa had no means of knowing anything of what had taken place, excepting as heard from the colonel himself. But the latter took the query as proof that she knew all, and had been trifling with him from the beginning. His anger intensified at the belief that he had been detected in an attempt to belittle one upon whom he looked as a rival in the affections of the young lady.

"Suppose the Mohawk did shoot one or two of our warriors. It did not secure the liberty of the booby, nor would he have got away without my consent. All this does not justify

you in coming here and telling me a deliberate falsehood as you have done."

"I do not understand you," said the astonished captive. "I have not told you any falsehood; I would not do such a thing to save my life. My last remark was a question."

"That will do for a rebel like you to tell me, but I have met too many such as you to be deceived. You will gain nothing by adopting such a course with me."

"If you persist in discrediting all I say, there is no need of our talking together," she answered, with dignity. "I have disputed the truth of nothing you have told me, and before I declare anything, you accuse me of falsehood. Are you in earnest?"

The Tory seized the opening to extricate himself from an unpleasant predicament. He was impressed with the truthfulness of the girl, and could do nothing less than acknowledge it.

"I thought from your words and manner that you wished to cast a slur upon what I had told you, and a man of honor like myself could not but resent such an imputation."

"Since all is understood between us, I hope nothing more will arise."

"It shall not be my fault if it does. Do you know, Rosa," said the colonel, with a burst of confidence, "that it gives me great sorrow to think that we are arrayed on opposing sides in this war?"

"That can be easily remedied," she said, with a smile.

"How?" was his eager inquiry.

"All you have to do is to come over to our side."

But even as she made the proposal, she felt that such an ally would be a discredit to whatever cause he was engaged in. Colonel Butler shook his head.

"You couldn't ask an old soldier to desert his flag."

"I haven't done so; but I mentioned the only plan by which your sorrow can be removed."

"There is another," he said, slyly.

"I am not aware of it."

"It is for you to come over to our side."

"You are doing the same thing which you reproved in me."

"But you are not a soldier."

"I would be if I were a man like you—a soldier for the patriots in their war for independence."

He shook his head gravely, as if saddened at hearing such heretical sentiments from her lips. Said he:

"If you would take the time to think calmly over the matter, you would see the error you and your folks have made. There is no more chance of the colonies gaining their independence, as you call it, than there would be if they went over to England and tried to subjugate that nation. She, the mightiest empire in the world, on whose possessions the sun never sets, whose men-of-war plow every sea on the globe—why, the thought of a few ragged colonies daring to resist her is so preposterous that it makes me smile."

The young patriot could not listen in silence to such slurs upon the principles for which she was ready to die.

"They will gain their independence just as sure as the sun of to-morrow will rise. Three millions of people, fighting for liberty, which they hold dearer than life, cannot be conquered by all the nations in the world."

"That's the stuff your orators and fools have been preaching for years past, and the defeat of the other day is but one of the fruits which they are reaping as a penalty. It sounds well to urge the poor victims on to their death, but that is all it will amount to. If you were the true friend to your country that you claim to be, you would do what you could to persuade them of the folly of their course. One with such grace and beauty as yours could exert a great influence for the good of your people."

"What little I can do shall be given freely to America—in the way of urging them never to cease their resistance to England till our independence is secured," she returned, spiritedly. "I shall urge them as I have in the past—never to forge the sword into the pruning hook as long as there remains one hostile soldier upon our soil—to send all the men to the front and to keep them there; and when Indians and Tories invade the homes behind them, we will send our old men and boys to drive them off, as we did the other day. Though I knew that my father, brother and dearest friends were doomed to fall before the liberty of my country could be secured, still I would urge them on; and my unfaltering

trust is that he who reigns in Heaven will never allow a horrible tyranny to triumph over a righteous cause like that for which the American people are now imperiling their lives and their all."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

VAIN SCHEMING.

This impassioned burst of patriotism on the part of Rosa Minturn fairly took the breath from Colonel Butler, who, during its utterance, removed his pipe from his mouth and sat staring at the ardent young rebel in speechless amazement and admiration. There must have penetrated into his brain, for the time being at least, a conviction that the words, coming from the heart as they did, were like the utterances of some seer of the olden time, whose vision, penetrating the misty future, saw the outline of events which were destined surely to come to pass. She spoke with all the emphasis of one who felt the truth of the words which fell from her lips, and speaking in this manner, could not fail to impress the one whom she addressed. The latter, as he saw that beauteous face light up with the fire of emotion, which burned as well in the lustrous eyes, was charmed by the countenance of the fair patriot, which for him

possessed an enchantment that he had never experienced before.

"Perhaps she speaks the truth after all," was the thought that stole into his mind. "She talks like one who knows the verity of what she says. It may be that England has undertaken a greater work than she can complete. But pshaw!" he added, impatiently. "What fancies are creeping into my head! The beauty of the young minx is robbing me of my sense."

He sat in silence for a time after she had uttered the glowing speech until he could recover, in a measure, from its effect; and then, as the pipe went back into his mouth he continued:

"You seem to feel so deeply what you say that I won't dispute you. But you must remember that every cause, no matter how hopeless it may be, is sure to have some adherents that are ready to stake their lives that it is going to succeed, even when it is near its ruin. Your devotion to this rebellion blinds your judgment and you see things with distorted visions. But let that pass. I have not abandoned hope that you will yet see the error of your ways before it is too late. And, dear Rosa," he continued, in a low voice, as he moved closer to her, "I

cannot but think what a splendid future is before you, if you would only be known as a loyal subject of the king of Great Britain. You can go to that country after this little rebellion is ended and your beauty and wit would make you among the most famous in the land. You would receive attentions such as are bestowed on royalty itself. Wealth and happiness would be placed at your feet, and I would be the proudest and happiest of men—"

The Tory was going faster and faster in his inane fashion when Rosa turned on him with such a look of scorn that he seemed to awake to the fact that he was acting the part of a crazy man. He abruptly paused, turned his head another way, placed his pipe between his teeth and was silent. It was as if some sudden blow on the head had roused him from his dream and shown him what a simpleton he was making of himself.

She opened her lips to utter an indignant reply to the "declaration" of the officer, when the truth flashed upon her. She saw that only injury would result from the words she had framed while much might be gained by holding her peace and affecting an ignorance of the real

meaning of his argument. There was silence for a minute or two, during which she looked around to see what the Indians were doing.

It was near noon, and the Iroquois, in obedience to the command of the colonel, had completed their preparations for going to the river and embarking for Forty Fort again, with the purpose of leaving the valley altogether. It was this departure from the encampment which Rosa dreaded. She felt that if Lena-Wingo were not able to do something before the Susquehanna was crossed, he was not likely to gain the chance.

"How soon do you start for the fort?" she asked.

He looked up, surprised and gratified that she should address him so gently after offending her.

"I have told the men to make ready at once and there seems to be nothing left except to set out for the river."

"You mean to go straight back to the fort?"

"That's the idea. We have been much longer on this side of the stream than I anticipated when I left, and there are so many important

matters suffering on account of my absence that it won't do to wait longer."

Rosa could scarcely believe that she was *tête-à-tête* with Colonel Butler, the leader of the band which had so lately laid waste the Wyoming valley. She could not be more gentle and respectful in manner than he. It was almost ludicrous to observe the delicacy of his references to the errand that was the cause of his crossing to this shore.

"Would a few hours make any difference to you—I mean in the time of your return to the fort?" she asked, in the most insinuating tone at her command.

"It might make a great deal of difference and it might not make any. Why do you ask?"

"I have been wandering all night and a part of the day in the wood and am so wearied that a longer rest in this place would be very acceptable to me."

Rosa saw at once that the Tory suspected her motive, but he endeavored to act as though he thought she had no ulterior purpose in making the request.

"If you are wearied, your strength shall not be taxed any more," he responded, in a voice

that awakened the strongest hope. "I will provide against that."

"You are kind," she answered, bowing smilingly at him, as if he were some noble gallant of the olden time, "and I appreciate all these favors. Then you will not start for several hours more?"

"I am sorry that I shall have to disappoint you there. I find, on reflection, that I have been so long on this side that it will not do to spend another hour here; but your request for rest shall be heeded."

"How? Will you leave me here under a guard till night?"

The eagerness with which the query was propounded would have confirmed the suspicions of the Tory as to the object of his captive, even if he was not satisfied before. Still he endeavored to conceal all appearance of suspicion on his part as he answered:

"That would hardly be prudent, but our Indians are strong and they will be glad to carry you from the camp to the river."

Rosa was horrified.

"What! I carried by those warriors?" she

exclaimed. "I would not permit it for the world!"

"They will treat you as gently as your own parents, but, if you object to them, I shall only be too happy to take you in my arms to the stream, praying that the distance were ten times as great as it is."

Poor Rosa was filled with dismay. Every proposition made by her was met by something more distasteful, until she began to fear she was involving herself in trouble from which there was no escape.

"I could not consent to place you to such inconvenience," she said, trying to hide the abhorrence that filled her soul at the thought. "If you are determined to go to the river I do not suppose that anything I can say would serve to change your mind, only perhaps to make you hurry more. I could not agree to be carried in the arms of an Indian warrior, nor in yours. If you wish to go, do not allow me to detain you; I have enough strength to walk it, and if I have not, I will call on you."

"The distance is quite short," said the Tory, not noticing the insinuation of his rebellious

prisoner, "and I am sure that your fatigue will not be increased by such a brief walk; we will time our gait so as to suit you, and if you insist, will take a rest on the way."

CHAPTER XXIX.

AT THE SHORE.

Rosa saw that it was useless to try to help Lena-Wingo by anything she could do with Colonel Butler. She, therefore, yielded the contest as gracefully as she knew how.

"I am ready to go as soon as you wish," she said, as she rose from the log, and looking toward him awaited his commands.

She held some hopes that an assumption of offended dignity on her part would cause the Tory to defer to her wishes. But it did not. The man had a wholesome dread of remaining longer on the same side the Susquehanna with so terrible a foe as the Mohawk scout, who had given him and his allies more than one taste of what he could do when his blood was roused. Besides, there were other misgivings crowding upon his attention and making him uneasy; and much as he would have liked to defer to the wishes of the fair rebel with whom he was infatuated, self-preservation forbade him to do so.

She had hardly risen, when he did the same, and said something to the leading Indian which Rosa did not hear. All that she noticed was that the warrior whom Colonel Butler addressed was the same one who had interfered to protect her from insult, from which she concluded he was the highest in authority among the Iroquois present. Whether to be rejoiced at this or whether to be cast down was more than she could determine. The savage was an individual whom she could not understand.

Following the words of the Tory, there was a general shouldering of rifles and gathering up of blankets, and the next minute the score or so of Indians were ready to start for the river hard by. At this juncture, when the leader was looking around, to make sure that all were present, there was perfect silence for those few seconds only. The stillness for that moment was like that of the tomb. During the brief interval, when everything was held in suspense, every warrior, together with the Tory colonel, and even Rosa Minturn herself, distinctly heard the click of a rifle as the hammer fell without report.

It came from the woods behind them, where the undergrowth was so dense that a dozen men might have concealed themselves within fifty feet; the sound was so clearly marked that no one could mistake its meaning. At that juncture the captive was looking in the face of Butler, and saw him start, and turn pale, like one who heard his own knell. He did not speak, but turned to the Iroquois leader, as if petitioning him to save him from the impending peril. The warrior showed the real bravery for which he had always been noted among his people. He muttered something that seemed to be a command for the rest of his warriors to remain where they were, while he bounded into the woods on the opposite side from whence came the alarming sound, and vanished. He had gone to ascertain what it meant, and in the meantime his followers were to hold their place against his return.

Colonel Butler believed that he was about to be attacked, and he was made uneasy at the action of the leader.

But the moment was critical. Fearful of an attempt at rescue, to be met half-way by the

captive herself, he stepped close to her, and said, in a low voice of frightful earnestness:

"The minute you try to run away, that minute a tomahawk will be buried in your brain. I will give the order myself!"

"And you are the one I believe would do it without waiting for another," replied Rosa with flashing eyes.

"So I will," he answered. "I am bound to take you away with me. You shall never see Wyoming valley again. You must go with me, and you may as well make up your mind to that at once. So it won't pay to trifle with us."

The Tory had shown his real self and the high-spirited girl scorned to make reply to his threats.

Despite the crisis which seemed to be at hand, and the danger of exciting the anger of the Tory, she deliberately turned her back upon him, just as she did when the young Indian became annoying in his attentions. The white face of the Tory turned to crimson, but the occasion was one in which he was prevented from doing as he wished. It was all important that he should prepare for the attack that was impend-

ing. He was quite sure that the black eyes of Lena-Wingo were fixed upon him from the concealment of the undergrowth, and the instant he offered any rudeness would be the signal for a bullet from him. This was surely motive enough for him to hold his peace, and restrain any impoliteness toward the captive.

The click of the hammer of the hidden rifle was a warning for the Iroquois to prepare for an attack from their enemies. The majority of the former sprang behind trees, in the most approved fashion of the Indians, while others, not knowing from what point the assault was likely to come, dropped to the ground, extending themselves at full length and waiting till they could learn more of their foes than was conveyed by the simple sound mentioned.

The Tory and Rosa were the only ones who stood out in full view, she knowing there could be no danger from her friends, while he did not believe he could increase his chances of escape by resorting to the means taken by his red allies. She was determined that if any chance offered, to seize it in spite of the threats of the Tory, relying on her own fleetness and the quickness of Lena-Wingo to prevent her being

harmed. The plan of the Indians was to wait where they were till they received some message from their leader who was engaged in reconnoitering. The fear of the chief was that Lena-Wingo might have secured assistance from Wilkesbarre, in view of the attempt to conduct the lady to the fort. If such were the fact, the situation of the party, including that of Colonel Butler, was extremely critical, and a desperate fight was impending. If there were but the two young patriots and the Mohawk, the recapture of the girl could not be affected as they believed. So the Tory and redskins were awaiting the information from their leader.

In less than twenty minutes a signal was heard from the wood, which caused a thrill of excitement in all. Then it was repeated, and the whole party came out from their shelter behind the trees and upon the ground, and met together as before in the center of the campground.

The action of her captors filled Rosa with dismay, which was increased by the reappearance of the leader and by the message which he brought back.

"It was an idle alarm," said Colonel Butler, blandly, to Rosa. "We thought there was a party of whites at hand, but the chief brings word that the Mohawk crept up to take a shot at some of us, when his gun snapped. He concluded the best thing for him was to pull out, which he proceeded to do without waiting to reload till he got to a safe distance. I am happy to say that all danger is now past, and we will resume our walk to the river."

In accordance with his promise, the Tory proceeded slowly, the Indians scattering somewhat and on the alert for danger, despite the assurance the Tory had just given that there was no harm. The distance to the Susquehanna was less than Rosa supposed and it was reached within a few minutes. There several canoes were waiting, one of which Colonel Butler, Rosa and the Iroquois leader entered, and the start was made for the other shore of the Susquehanna.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE PURSUERS.

We return to the little party that were gathered about the cavern on the morning after the flight of Rosa. It consisted of the three friends — Jo Minturn, Ned Clinton and the Mohawk. The last named discovered, before the day was fairly upon them, the cause that led to the flight of the maiden. When he declared that she had been driven away, but not by the Indians, he explained that the entrance of the bear was the reason for her abandoning the refuge in such a hurry—an excuse which all were ready to acknowledge was sufficient to drive any unarmed person from a hiding-place.

It took but a few minutes for the dusky scout to ascertain that she had succeeded in getting away without injury, and was undoubtedly wandering in the woods at that very hour. That being the case, the natural plan which suggested itself for her rescue—if she was in any peril—was to take her trail and follow it with-

out delay. This was the purpose of the Mohawk, as he declared it to his young friends the next moment.

It was no trouble for a veteran like him to do this for hours at a time, but the difficulty referred to in another place suggested itself. There could be no divining the route or general course of the missing girl.

The only thing to be done was to follow her trail closely and unremittingly until she was found. Lena-Wingo understood the inestimable importance of every hour and minute he could command, when the forest was full of Iroquois, hunting for the lost one, who, in obedience to the law which obtains at such times, was liable to run into the hands of the very ones whom she was seeking to avoid.

"Come on—follow fast—make no noise."

As the words escaped him, he took the trail and started off as fast as the nature of his duty would permit. The young patriots were at his heels, as eager as he to come up with the missing Rosa before she ran into any more danger. Here and there they were able to detect the faint footprints left by the wanderer, but for three-fourths of the time the trail was as "blind"

as if it led over the surface of solid rock. But there was no hesitation on the part of their leader. He did not walk rapidly, but kept up a steady, even gait, with his gaze upon the ground in front, now and then raising his eyes, as if looking for the point where this pursuit was leading them.

He was unwilling, also, to leave the duty of watching for danger to his companions. At regular intervals he paused and listened, and scrutinized the surroundings. This was continued for more than two hours, during which the youths gave expression to their amazement more than once at the long distance passed over by Rosa.

"She seems incapable of weariness," said Ned, on one of these occasions, when they stopped for a brief consultation.

"Yes. She can walk as far as either of us without fatigue," replied her brother. "She has gone mile after mile with me and with Lena-Wingo, and returned home at night as fresh as when she started in the morning. It would be better if she had tired out and stopped to rest."

"It looks as if she spent most of the night in trying to get back to the cavern."

"That what she do," said the Mohawk, who had little to say when the others were talking.

"And the result, as we can see, has been that she has gone further and further away in her bewilderment," added Jo.

"It may be, judging from the circuitous course, that we have passed quite close to her, for we have almost doubled on our own track several times."

"If so, she must be asleep, for you have heard Lena-Wingo signal to her without response."

"It is to be hoped that she was not so bewildered as to have been seen by any of the Iroquois."

In expressing this hope, Ned Clinton gave utterance to the fear which was in the breast of the Mohawk, no less than in that of the brother of Rosa. Lena-Wingo turned quickly as the words were spoken, and looked at his friend, who expected him to say something, but the warrior remained silent.

"Have you seen any prints of moccasins?" asked Ned.

"Woods full of them," was the alarming answer.

"But we have seen nothing of the Iroquois themselves," ventured Jo.

By way of answer to this implied doubt, the Mohawk said, pointing at the same time to their left:

"See there!"

There was no mistaking the nature of that which greeted their gaze. The smoke which was slowly ascending above the tree tops not more than a hundred yards from where they had stopped for a few minutes came from a camp-fire of their enemies.

"Maybe she is there," said Ned, in a hushed voice.

"Let us go and see," added Jo, instantly.

"Come on—make no noise."

Lena-Wingo moved directly toward the spot where the fire was burning, the scouts treading as silently as before at his heels. They advanced with great caution, as became those who were about to enter a hostile camp, and in the course of the next five minutes came in sight of the camp.

It was deserted, not a living person being visible. It was probably the remains of the fire kindled by a party of Iroquois that had spent

the night there, and, after their morning meal, gone off again.

"They may have taken her with them," said Ned, when the Mohawk gave this version of the cause of the absence of all signs of life.

The dusky scout was not the one to allow such a possibility to pass unexamined. He made a full investigation of the tell-tale evidence which the builders of this fire could not avoid leaving behind. The result was briefly reached and all that could be asked. Two warriors had spent the night there, departing in the morning, and Rosa was not with them.

The young patriots were highly encouraged by this discovery, and began to feel strong hopes that the girl had managed to keep out of the reach of her enemies. The pursuers had been so long engaged by this time, that all were expecting to come up with her at every new turn or advance in the pursuit. Lena-Wingo was guarded about making any signals to attract her attention, since he had caught a number of those made by the Iroquois, showing they were so near that he was liable to come in collision with them, except by the exercise of the strictest care. The presumption was that

any call which he could make that would be noticed by Rosa, even if she were quite near, was certain to reach the ears of her enemies. Besides this, he was confident of being so close to her, that they must soon meet, and the means referred to was unnecessary.

Thus it was that from the time they approached the deserted camp fire, they ceased trying to gain her notice by calling to her. Within the next half hour the fallen tree was reached where our readers will remember she had turned and fled, as she believed, from some ravening beast of the forest. Turning back, the delicate foot-prints were followed until the pursuers came to the brook again at a narrow spot, where the wanderer leaped across, striking in such soft soil that the mark was distinct. Here, of course, all three bounded over, and paused a moment to look at the evidence of the dear one having been there but a short time before.

"What's the matter, Lena-Wingo?" asked Jo, as the Mohawk started, and uttered an exclamation in his own tongue.

"See there!" he replied, pointing to the ground before them.

CHAPTER XXXI.

FOLLOWING THE TRAIL.

THE gesture of Lena-Wingo told the alarming story. The earth was so moist that no one could step upon it without leaving a distinct impression. The two Iroquois whom, it will be remembered, had hit upon the trail of Rosa at that point, had kept at a distance of a few feet from it, as if to avoid disturbing it.

But the impressions of the moccasins were so clear that the wonder was they had not been noticed by the youths from the very first. But they saw them now and knew what they meant.

"The Iroquois have captured her," wailed Jo, turning white and recoiling a step.

"No; not got her yet—they find trail—follow her—maybe not find her—we follow."

This, then, was not as terrible as he had supposed. It meant that a couple of warriors, having discovered the footprints of Rosa, had

started to pursue her. As the scouts viewed it, they might not have kept up the chase, or they might still be at it, with a chance of her friends arriving in time to prevent their doing any harm. One glance ahead told the Mohawk that she had taken refuge in a clump of bushes elsewhere described. Without waiting for his companions, he ran to the spot, they hurrying after him, and wondering what the matter could be. His speed took him to the place considerably in advance of the others. Before they could join him, he ascertained that she had been there and had gone again. Once more he bounded like a sleuthhound on the trail, and the next moment learned the astounding truth.

"They got her!" he called out to his friends, as they hastened to join him. "Two Iroquois catch her!"

The youths paused as abruptly as if smitten by a cannon shot. White, panting and rigid, they stared at the Mohawk who had uttered the awful words. He noticed their action, or rather want of action, but felt no disposition to indulge in sentimentality or emotion.

"Two of them—three of us," he called out;

"come 'long — soon catch — take her away again."

The ringing words roused the others from the stunning shock of the tidings that Rosa was a captive in the hands of the Iroquois, and while the Mohawk moved off they followed him as before. Neither spoke, but their lips were compressed, and there was an iron resolve in the heart of each. If Rosa was a prisoner, she should not remain so! She should be rescued; the foul hands of Colonel Butler should never be laid upon that pure, spotless maiden; no, *never!*

Three men were in hot pursuit, and nothing less than death itself could check them. The great fear that stirred the heart of each was that the two Indians who held Rosa captive would succeed in reaching camp with her before the pursuers could come up with them. Even should they do so, the determination of her friends was none the less unwavering, but the chance of success was correspondingly lessened. Though the time had been improved to its fullest extent by those who were hunting Rosa Minturn, yet the route was so tortuous that

they were thrown a long way behind her—further, indeed, than Lena-Wingo supposed.

The three grim avengers swept along the trail, made so plain now by the addition of that of the Iroquois, with so much speed that the young scouts feared the clue would be lost altogether. In a short time there was another halt. The Mohawk had reached the spot where the other two Indians joined the party. There was no motive for concealment, and he told the truth.

"Who cares?" demanded Ned Clinton; "if there were a dozen, the case would be no different; we shall conquer them all."

"I agree with you," promptly added the brother; "the redskins are cowards, and we can scatter them at the first charge."

The Mohawk looked at them with an admiring expression and remarked:

"Lena-Wingo think so too!"

"That's the kind of talk!" exclaimed Clinton; "lead on!"

Once more the Mohawk resumed the pursuit, walking with so long and loping a step, that it was all his companions could do to equal it without breaking into a run. This new trail, followed some distance, gave signs that the pursuers were

close upon the Indians, and the dusky scout was obliged to moderate his gait as a precautionary measure. Traveling a few hundred yards further, the Mohawk paused. His companions looked around, but saw nothing to warrant the cessation of progress.

"Iroquois close by," said he; "walk slow—soon be there."

He made them keep a little further behind him than they had been doing, and it was only a short time after that he halted again and signaled for them to join him as carefully as they knew how. A few steps and they were at his side. Taking the arm of Ned, he pointed ahead. Dimly and only partially was the edge of the camp which they were seeking discerned by the young patriots.

The Mohawk purposely halted at a safe distance, his object being to avoid the risk of his young friends exposing themselves at this critical point of the pursuit. Standing where they were, and screened behind the trees, which were all around them, the scouts were only able to catch a glimpse of the smouldering fire, with a portion of an Indian standing quietly near it. The latter took a step, and then he, like the

others, was hidden from sight by the intervening trees and undergrowth. This condition of things was so unsatisfactory that, by general consent, they began stealing forward to obtain a better view.

All three moved with so much circumspection that in a little while they were able to see all the parties gathered about the camp. The moment was when Rosa Minturn and Colonel Butler were in the midst of their discussion about the affairs between the colonies and the mother country. The patriotic sentiments of the captive were uttered in so clear and emphatic a voice that her three friends caught every word. It would be hard to tell whose heart responded more proudly to the thrilling words. Jo felt that he had a sister of whom a king might feel proud, while Ned Clinton wondered at his own temerity in presuming to think he could ever prove worthy of the love of so noble a girl. The black eyes of Lena-Wingo kindled, and the old fire stirred his heart. He understood the thrilling sentiments, which were an echo of his own, and were the cause, too, of his forswearing his own race and throwing all his might and prowess on the side of the weak

colonies struggling so bravely for their freedom.

The Mohawk moved back a few paces, his companions cautiously following him. He then quickly explained his startling scheme. It was nothing more nor less than to make an attack upon the party of Indians, which were fully six times as numerous as they. The scheme pleased the young patriots beyond expression. They were in just the mood for a daring enterprise like that whether it should prove a total failure or complete success! And so it was agreed to by all!

CHAPTER XXXII.

A STRANGE INTERVIEW.

THE plan of the Mohawk was for himself and his companions to steal up so close that there could be no mistake in their aim. Then each was to pick his man, the expectation being that in the case of one and possibly two, being killed, a third might be wounded. The understanding was that Lena-Wingo was to fire the first shot, which was to kill Colonel Butler.

The instant that was done he was to leap up, uttering a series of yells, intended to give the impression that double the number of assailants had attacked them. At the same time, Ned and Jo were to open fire, reloading and creating all the outcry possible. In the midst of the confusion it was believed that Rosa could be run off into the woods, and the Iroquois so effectually scattered that the contest would be finished.

It was a wild and daring scheme—the most singular fact connected with it being that the Mohawk and the ardent young scouts were

stirred to the deed by the words of the unconscious patriot—Rosa Minturn herself. Time was precious, and the Mohawk had noted a moment before that the Iroquois had completed their preparations for going to the river, near at hand. Looking at their guns, to see that they were ready, the three scouts stole back to their places at the moment the whole party were standing in readiness to start for the canoes. Just as he had done hundreds of times before, the Mohawk raised his rifle to his shoulder, and pointed it straight at the breast of the Tory commander. Two seconds were enough to make his aim sure, when he pulled the trigger.

To his consternation, his rifle did what it was never known to do before—it missed fire!

Never was the Mohawk more astounded, and for one moment he stood like a statue. Then he peered through the undergrowth, and saw the Iroquois preparing for the attack, while his old friend and enemy was in the act of taking to the woods to learn the strength and intention of the assailing party. It would never do for them to learn that there were only two young men and one Indian for the discovery would render the Iroquois themselves the assailants,

and overthrow everything. The instant the other scout started back into the forest with the intention of coming round to the front, Lena-Wingo hastily withdrew to where his young friends were waiting and trembling with suppressed excitement.

"Go back—don't stay here," he commanded, motioning them to retreat.

They did not understand why this should be done, but they obeyed, moving back until there was no danger of their discovery. They were but a short time in hiding, when the Iroquois scout was discovered stealing among the trees a short distance off.

Ned was on the point of suggesting that they should withdraw to a still greater distance, when Lena-Wingo deliberately straightened up and walked toward the Iroquois. The young patriots expected that he meant to attack him, and they watched their actions with intense interest. Their surprise may be imagined when they saw the two look at each other a moment, and then advanced like a couple of friendly neighbors desirous of holding a little confab. There they stood before Jo and Ned, talking in low tones, and with no more appearance of enmity than

would have been exhibited in the case of the two young scouts themselves.

This extraordinary interview lasted nearly ten minutes, the two Indians speaking in their native tongue, and in such low tones that, still as was the forest, the listeners could not catch the sound of their voices.

"That's the queerest proceeding I ever saw," said Jo, when the warriors acted as if they were about to separate.

"That Iroquois must be the one that Lena-Wingo spared last night, and that befriended Rosa when she was hiding with Lena-Wingo, near Forty Fort."

"That explains it; though even then, it's the strangest thing I ever heard tell of."

"Here comes Lena-Wingo. We'll find out what they said to each other. I'll do the questioning."

But on that point there was a little miscalculation. The Mohawk would not give to either the slightest intimation of what had passed between himself and the Iroquois. Nor could he when months and years had gone, be persuaded to tell any one a single word uttered by himself or the other warrior during that singular

interview. The result, however, was an entire change of programme, and in view of what shortly took place, it may be suspected that the two distinguished warriors "saw" each other on that occasion.

In his broken way, Lena-Wingo told his young friends that his gun had failed him at the critical moment, and the plan which they had in mind at that time was no longer feasible. He had decided upon another, which was to wait until the party embarked in their canoes for the other side of the Susquehanna. He took only time enough to make this known to them, when he set out for the river accompanied by the youths.

They were so close to the stream that they reached it within the next few minutes, and before the Iroquois had embarked with their captive and Colonel Butler. At the spot where water was touched the trees and undergrowth were dense, no better place for concealment being offered by the entire length of the Susquehanna. One object would have attracted the notice of any person whose gaze happened to be turned that way. That was a tree extended over the water, so that, for some eight or ten

ROSA MINTURN'S ESCAPE FROM THE TORIES.—Page 239.

feet from the shore, the roots of the trunk reached outward almost horizontally. A fisherman could have made his way along the tree and then sat down with his feet dangling nearly to the surface of the stream. This scrubby trunk was surrounded by and inclosed in a rank growth of vegetation. All this it is necessary to tell, in order to understand that which is to come.

Pausing on the shore near this vegetable freak, the Mohawk told his companions all that he considered they should know as to his scheme. They were to station themselves with their loaded guns a few rods away from the tree and there hold themselves in readiness for orders. He assured them that they were quite certain to have hot work in a few minutes. They were not to fire their guns unless they saw that it must be done for the safety of the girl whom they were about to attempt to rescue, or in self defense. They, as a matter of course, pledged that his command should be obeyed in spirit and letter.

Having received this promise, the Mohawk accompanied them to the station which he had fixed upon for them. After a few words, reiter-

ating what he had already said, he left and went to his own place on the shore of the river. There he was invisible to those whose imaginations were left free to conjure up all manner of wild schemes for the rescue of the imperiled one. They could only converse in whispers, while they watched and listened with their nerves strung to the highest pitch of excitement. But the eventful moment was close at hand. They soon heard the sound of the Iroquois paddles, showing that the embarkment had taken place, and Colonel Butler was on his way to the other shore of the Susquehanna, with Rosa Minturn as his prisoner.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THROUGH BY DAYLIGHT.

THE Iroquois took their departure from the southeastern shore of the Susquehanna in three canoes. Colonel Butler, in spite of the assurance he had received from the Iroquois scout who had come back from the woods with the report that there was no danger to be feared, felt a misgiving that the stream would not be crossed without trouble. His knowledge of the Mohawk warrior led him to doubt that he would submit quietly to such a complete overturning of his plans. The Tory, therefore, neglected no precaution against failure at the last moment. The memory of that click which told of the miss of Lena-Wingo's gun followed him into the boat and he could not rid himself of a shuddering belief that the weapon of the savage had been pointed at him.

As they took their places in the canoe, Rosa, actuated by a desire to get as far as possible from the Tory, took her seat in the stern of

the boat, sitting as far back as she could. Colonel Butler, following her, was about to ensconce himself as near her as the vessel would permit, when the warrior objected.

"What's the matter with you?" growled the officer, looking round at the one who had dared to interfere with him.

"Sit there," replied the warrior, pointing to the prow; "can't paddle—canoe won't go."

He gathered from this that the warrior who was to impel the boat through the water meant to say it was necessary that he should place himself in the prow, that the vessel might be paddled more readily. This was reasonable, and the colonel could find no excuse for disobeying, although he assented with ill grace.

"The next time I'd rather you wouldn't have quite so much to say."

By this arrangement, Rosa and the colonel were placed as far apart as possible in the same canoe. The Iroquois took his position in the middle, paddle in hand, and dipped the implement into the water. The other two boats had shoved off, and were making their way down the shore, preparatory to striking across the stream.

By some understanding, emanating originally from the leading character, it was arranged that they should all pass down the current, until opposite a large stone on the shore, when they would head straight for the other bank. So they started, the canoe of Colonel Butler last of all. Only a few strokes were taken when the warrior injured his hand in some way, and stopped paddling for a moment while he examined it.

It was only for a second or two that he did this, when he dipped his paddle again, and resumed progress. But, brief as was the period, it resulted in placing his canoe a rod further behind the others. Heading down the stream in this manner, the other boats were in plain view of Rosa Minturn, who, perched in the stern, watched their progress in advance of her.

She had noticed the tree before described, and she saw the first boat pass beneath it, where the trunk was so low that the warriors were compelled to incline their heads to prevent grazing it. A few seconds afterward the second boat did the same, and she watched the approach of their own craft. Before her canoe reached the point, however, the first boat was opposite the

rock and headed out in the river for the other shore.

Colonel Butler had not spoken after his remark to the warrior, but sat looking down the current at the other two boats and occasionally glanced back at the captive near him, while she in turn studiously avoided meeting his eye. On one of these occasions, when he was gazing at the leading boat, as it turned out into the stream, the warrior inclined himself toward her, as he thrust his paddle into the stream, so that his face was brought close to that of the girl. The latter noticed the singular action and looked questioningly at him. For just one second he fixed his black eyes on her, and muttered, in a low, quick voice:

"Watch tree." Then he dipped his paddle as before, and did not look at her again.

Rosa was quick-witted, and knowing as she did the peculiar relations between this Iroquois and Lena-Wingo, she divined his meaning like a flash. The words were not more than uttered, when Butler turned his head and looked back, as if his suspicion was awakened. But he saw nothing to justify any misgivings.

A second later he was compelled to bow his head, to escape being grazed by the peculiar tree. Then came the Indian's turn and then Rosa's.

She was in the act of leaning forward, when a human hand was thrust from the thick vegetation. She was expecting it and partly rose, so as to allow a dusky arm to be thrust beneath her own, when she was lifted out of the canoe as though she were but an infant.

Colonel Butler felt the swaying of the boat, caused by the sudden withdrawal of her weight, and he turned, wondering what the cause could be. He was just in time to catch sight of the figure of Lena-Wingo hurrying along the bushy trunk of the overhanging tree, bearing the form of Rosa Minturn in his arms.

"Look there!" he shouted excitedly. "Don't you see that Mohawk running off with the woman? Quick! Shoot him! Run the canoe into the shore! There isn't a second to be lost! Hello, yonder!" he added, gesticulating desperately to the other canoes that had stopped, as though the occupants did not understand the cause of the excitement. "Back with you! He'll be in Wilkesbarre before you get ashore."

At that instant those in advance comprehended what had been done. They headed toward shore, which was but a short distance off, paddling with so much vigor that they touched land with a few powerful strokes. Glimpses of the Mohawk could be caught as he skillfully fought his way over the tree, where it was a difficult matter to move with the burden in his arms, on account of the luxuriance of the vines and vegetation which enveloped the trunk. At the same time that Colonel Butler uttered his words of alarm, his Iroquois companion muttered an exclamation of anger, struck the paddle deep into the water, and headed toward land, as if with the purpose of cutting off the Mohawk before he could reach it.

"Why don't you shoot him?" demanded the Tory, who was beside himself and in danger of capsizing the little vessel. "He is close by and you cannot miss."

The warrior backed water instantly, so as to hold the canoe stationary, and to permit him to make his aim sure. Then he quickly raised his gun, and aimed straight at the figure hurrying over the log. Only for an instant, though, for he lowered it again.

"What's the matter?" shrieked the infuriated Tory. "Why don't you fire?"

"Hit girl—not kill Mohawk."

"Who cares if you do hit her? I would rather she would be shot than get away! Let me have your gun."

And reaching forward, he snatched the weapon from the grasp of the Indian and pointed it at the couple, who were not twenty yards distant. All this took place in a few seconds from the time Rosa was lifted bodily from the canoe and carried off. The distance from this point to where the woods were sufficiently dense to afford shelter was so short that, in spite of the undergrowth, it took the Mohawk but the briefest space to reach it, so that it was necessary that things should be made to move rapidly. Colonel Butler had but a flash of time in which to aim at the couple who were struggling for the cover of the forest. Aiming directly at the fugitive and his burden, and caring not whether he killed the maid or the man, or both, he pulled the trigger.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

CONCLUSION.

A SECOND rifle flashed in the pan that day. Following the pressure upon the trigger by Colonel Butler came the hissing puff which told the story of the fizzle, and realizing the escape of the daring Mohawk with his burden, the Tory flung the useless weapon far out into the river, denouncing himself because he had failed to bring another gun into the canoe with him. Had anyone been looking into the face of the Iroquois just then, he would have detected a strange expression which flitted over it like the flash of sunshine that sometimes darts through a passing cloud. Through the paint it resembled a self-satisfied grin. The whole thing added confirmation to the suspicion that there was an understanding between the Mohawk and this Iroquois, brought about during the interview in the woods already referred to. But events were moving with bewildering rapidity.

Hardly had Colonel Butler in his blind rage hurled the rifle into the Susquehanna when the canoe touched shore, the Iroquois sprang out and started in pursuit of the flying fugitives.

Only a few seconds behind him were the others, so that in a twinkling the whole party were ashore and in full chase. Ned Clinton and Jo Minturn, in their concealment, heard all these sounds and saw the Mohawk dart by them supporting Rosa, and traveling with the speed of a deer. The next instant the form of an Iroquois was seen, speeding only a short distance behind. The gun of Jo was raised when Ned knocked it aside.

"Don't shoot! that's a friend; he's the one that Lena-Wingo had the talk with."

"All right; there comes another; I s'pose I can drop him?"

"Yes; pick off all that come after, if you can."

Bang! went the gun before the words were fairly out of the mouth of the young patriot, and down went the Indian.

Bang! went the gun of the second youth, and a second pursuer dropped.

Then the two began reloading as fast as they could. The moment was critical; unless they could send in another shot, the enemy would know that there were but two of them, and make an attack from which there could be no escape. At this instant, the Iroquois warrior who had led the others came rushing back with the utmost speed of which he was capable.

Reaching Colonel Butler and the rest of his comrades, he called out in a suppressed voice, and with the appearance of one under great excitement, that a party from Wilkesbarre were close at hand! Butler heard the startling announcement, and he headed the stampede for the canoes, muttering a series of imprecations which we dare not record.

At the shore of the river the Indians bounded into the boats in greater haste than they had shown since entering the valley. And before they were fairly in position, the paddles were going, the occupants rowing desperately for the other shore and continually looking back for the appearance of a party of patriots on the bank, in case they did show themselves the Iroquois were sure of a volley from them; hence they strained every nerve to cross before the

volley should come. At the same time they held themselves in readiness to fire upon the whites the very moment they appeared. But the seconds passed and nothing of the kind took place.

It was not long before the other bank was reached and the warriors, with the Tory leader, sprang ashore and lost no time in making their way to Forty Fort, which was some distance below on the river.

* * * * * * *

While this was going on a small party were proceeding in a leisurely manner toward Wilkesbarre.

Lena-Wingo had run a short distance at the highest bent of his speed, when he discovered the stampede, almost at the instant it began. He stopped as suddenly in his flight as if he were shot. And when Rosa uttered an expression of alarm, he told her that all danger was gone. A moment afterward he summoned the young scouts to join them—using the familiar whistle as his signal.

It may well be supposed that the reunion of the members of the party was of the most joy-

ous nature. They had been through peril and suffering during the last few days, but here they were without a scratch as a memento of the fray. When Jo had embraced and kissed his sister again and again, while the tears of joy and thankfulness stood in his eyes, he released her and turned to his young friend.

"Ned, if you think anything of her give her a good kiss."

It was bliss indeed for the young patriot to throw his arms around the maiden, whose face was as crimson as his own, while he pressed her to his heart.

Rosa showed no resentment, and while he held her so close to his heart, he whispered:

"My own dearest Rosa, I love you!"

And even then she showed no anger. On the contrary, the downcast eyes and the glowing face, and the whole manner, looked as if she was pleased than otherwise. A half hour later the party entered Wilkesbarre, and the dangers were over.

* * * * * * *

On the same day, Colonel Butler withdrew his Tories and Indians from Wyoming valley.

The bones of the victims of that memorable massacre were allowed to bleach and whiten in the valley until the following October, when the patriot Colonel Butler, who had returned in August, ordered them gathered and buried. This was done, the bodies being taken up with pitchforks and placed in one common grave.

Something more than half a century later, the beautiful monument, which is, no doubt, familiar to many of our readers, was erected over the remains of the patriots who fell on that day which has given the name of Wyoming valley a fame that shall last for all time to come.

Of the deeds of the young patriots, and especially of Ned Clinton, this is not the place to speak. The two fought together in the Revolutionary war, rendering their country service which entitled them to be enshrined among the noble band of heroes who carried the flag of freedom safely through gloom and defeat to the fullness of glory and triumph. Lena-Wingo, the Mohawk, was equally efficient in his own peculiar way, and his name for years was blessed by the patriots and anathematized by the enemies of the struggling colonies.

Ned Clinton and his wife have long since slept in the valley, but the generations that have followed hold their names in affectionate reverence, and in that day for which all other days were made will rise up and call them blessed.

THE END.